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MERRY WIVES

OF

WINDSOR.

A

COMEDY.

By Mr. *WILLIAM SHAKESPEAR*



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Dramatis Personæ.

S I R John Falstaff.

Fenton, *a young Gentleman of small Fortune, in Love with Mrs. Anne Page.*

Shallow, *a Country Justice.*

Slender, *Cousin to Shallow, a foolish Country Squire.*

Mr. Page, } *two Gentlemen, dwelling at*
Mr. Ford, } *Windsor.*

Sir Hugh Evans, *a Welch Parson.*

Dr. Caius, *a French Doctor.*

Host of the Garter, *a merry talking Fellow.*

Bardolph,

Pistol, } *Sharpers attending on Falstaff.*

Nym,

Robin, *Page to Falstaff.*

William Page, *a Boy, Son to Mr. Page.*

Simple, *Servant to Slender.*

Rugby, *Servant to Dr. Caius.*

Mrs. Page, *Wife to Mr. Page.*

Mrs. Ford, *Wife to Mr. Ford.*

Mrs. Anne Page, *Daughter to Mr. Page, in Love with Fenton.*

Mrs. Quickly, *Servant to Dr. Caius.*

Servants to Page, Ford, &c.

SCENE WINDSOR.

THE





THE
Merry Wives of Windsor.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter Justice Shallow, Slender, and Sir Hugh Evans.

SHALLOW.



SIR Hugh, persuade me not; I will make a *Star-Chamber* Matter of it: list he were twenty Sir *John Falstaffs*, he shall not abuse *Robert Shallow, Esq;*

Slender. In the County of Gloucester, Justice of Peace, and Coram.

Shallow. Ay, Cousin *Slender*, and *Cousin*

Slender. Ay, and *Ratcliff* too; and a Gentleman born, Master Parson, who writes himself *Armigero*, in any Bill, Warrant, Quittance, or Obligation, *Armigero*.

Shallow. Ay, that I do, and have done any time these three hundred Years.

Slender. All his Successors, gone before him, have don't; and all his Ancestors, that come after him, may; they may give the dozen white *Luces* in their Coat.

Shallow. It is an old Coat.

Evans. The dozen white *Lows* do become an old Coat well; it agrees well *Passant*; it is a familiar Beast to Man, and signifies Love.

The Merry Wives

Shal. The Luce is the Fresh-fish, the Salt-fish is an old Coar.

Slen. I may quarter, Coz.

Shal. You may, by marrying.

Eva. It is marring indeed, if he quarters it.

Shal. Not a whit.

Eva. Yes per-lady; if he has a quarter of your Coat, there is but three Skirts for your self, in my simple Conjectures; but that is all one: If Sir *John Falstaff* have committed Disparagements upon you, I am of the Church, and will be glad to do my Benevolence, to make Atonements and Compremises between you.

Shal. The Council shall hear it; it is a Riot.

Eva. It is not meet the Council hear of a Riot; there is no Fear of Got in a Riot: The Council, look you, shall desire to hear the Fear of Got, and not to hear a Riot; take you viza-ments in that.

Shal. Ha! o' my Life, if I were young again, the Sword should end it.

Eva. It is petter that Friends is the Sword, that end it; and there is also another Device in my Prain, which peradventure prings good Discretions with it: There is *Anne Page*, which is Daughter to Master *Thomas Page*, which is pretty Virginity.

Slen. Mistress *Anne Page*? she has brown Hair, and speaks like a Woman.

Eva. It is that ferry Person for all the Orld, as just as you will desire; and seven hundred Pounds of Monies, and Gold, and Silver, is her Grand-fire upon his Death-bed (Got deliver to a joyful Resurrections) give, when she is able to overtake seventeen Years old: It were a good Motion, if we leave our pribbles and prabbles, and desire a Marriage between Master *Abraham*, and Mistress *Anne Page*.

Slen. Did her Grand-fire leave her seven hundred Pound?

Eva. Ay, and her Father is make her a petter Penny.

Slen. I know the young Gentlewoman: she has good Gifts.

Eva. Seven hundred Pounds, and Possibility is good Gifts.

Shal.

Shal. Well; let us see honest Mr. Page: Is *Falstaff* there?

Eva. Shall I tell you a Lie? I do despise a Liar as I do despise one that is false; or as I despise one that is not true. The Knight, Sir *John*, is there; and I beseech you be ruled by your Well-wishers. I will peat the Door [*Knocks*] for Master Page. What ho? Got bless your House here.

Enter Mr. Page.

Page. Who's there?

Eva. Here is Got's plessing, and your Friend, and Justice *Shallow*; and here's young Master *Slender*; that per-adventures shall tell you another Tale, if matters grow to your likings.

Page. I am glad to see your Worship's well: I thank you for my Venison, Master *Shallow*.

Shal. Master Page, I am glad to see you; much good do it your good Heart: I wish'd your Venison better; it was ill kill'd. How doth good Mistress Page? And I thank you always with my Heart, la; with my Heart.

Page. Sir, I thank you.

Shal. Sir, I thank you; by yea and no I do.

Page. I am glad to see you, good Master *Slender*.

Slen. How do's your fallow Greyhound, Sir? I heard say, he was out-run on *Cotfale*.

Page. It could not be judg'd, Sir.

Slen. You'll not confess, you'll not confess.

Shal. That he will not, 'tis your fault, 'tis your fault; 'tis a good Dog.

Page. A Cur, Sir.

Shal. Sir, he's a good Dog, and a fair Dog; can there be more said? He is good and fair. Is Sir *John Falstaff* here?

Page. Sir, he is within; and I would I could do a good Office between you.

Eva. It is spoke as a Christians ought to speak.

Shal. He hath wrong'd me, Master Page.

Page. Sir, he doth in some sort confess it.

Shal. If it be confess'd, it is not redress'd; is not that so, Master Page? He hath wrong'd me; indeed he hath, at a word he hath, believe me, *Robert Shallow*, Esquire, faith,

Page.

The Merry Wives

Page. Here comes Sir John.

Enter Sir John Falstaff, Bardolph, Nym and Pistol.

Fal. Now, Master Shallow, you'll complain of me to the King?

Shal. Knight, you have beaten my Men, kill'd my Deer, and broke open my Lodge.

Fal. But not kiss'd your Keeper's Daughter.

Shal. Tut, a pin; this shall be answer'd.

Fal. I will answer it straight: I have done all this. That is now answer'd.

Shal. The Council shall know this.

Fal. 'Twere better for you if it were known in Council; You'll be laugh'd at.

Eva. *Pauca verba*, Sir John, good Worts.

Fal. Good Worts? Good Cabbage. Slender, I broke your Head: what Matter have you against me?

Slen. Marry Sir, I have Matter in my Head against you, and against your Cony-catching Rascals, Bardolph, Nym and Pistol.

Bar. You Banbury Cheese;

Slen. Ay, it is no matter.

Pist. How now, *Mephistophilus*?

Slen. Ay, it is no matter.

Nym. Slice, I say, *pauca, pauca*: Slice, that's my Humour.

Slen. Where's Simple, my Man? Can you tell, Cousin?

Eva. Peace, I pray you: Now let us understand; there is three Umpires in this matter, as I understand; that is, Master Page, *fidelices*, Master Page; and there is my self, *fidelices*, my self; and the three Party is; lastly, and finally, mine Host of the Garter.

Mr. Page. We three to hear it, and end it between them.

Eva. Ferry good; I will make a Prief of it in my Note Book, and we will afterwards ork upon the Cause with as great discrectly as we can.

Fal. Pistol.

Pist. He hears with Ears.

Eva. The Tevil and his Tam; what Phrase is this, he hears with Ear? Why it is Affectations.

Fal. Pistol, did you pick Master Slender's Purse?

Slen.

Slon. Ay, by these Gloves he did, or I would I might never come in mine own great Chamber again else, of seven Groats in Mill-Harpens, and two Edward Shovel-boards, that cost me two Shilling and two Pence a piece, of *Yead Miller*; by these Gloves.

Fal. Is this true, *Pistol*?

Eva. No; it is false, if it is a Pick-purse.

Pist. Ha, thou Mountain Foreigner; Sir *John*, and Master mine, I Combate challenge of this *Latin* Bilboe: Word of Denial in thy *Labras* here; word of Denial; Froth and Scum, thou ly'st.

Slon. By these Gloves, then 'twas he.

Nym. Be advis'd, Sir, and pass good Humours: I will say marry trap with you, if you run the Nut-hook Humour on me; that is the very Note of it.

Slon. By this Hat, then he in the red Pate had it; for tho' I cannot remember what I did when you made me drunk, yet I am not altogether an Ass.

Fal. What say you, *Scurler* and *John*?

Bard. Why, Sir, for my part, I say, the Gentleman had drunk himself out of his five Senses.

Eva. It is his five Senses: Fie, what the Ignorance is?

Bard. And being sap, Sir, was, as they say, call'd; and so Conclusions pass the Car-cires.

Slon. Ay, you spake in *Latin* then too; but 'tis no matter; I'll ne'er be drunk whilst I live again, but in honest, civil, godly Company for this Trick; If I be drunk, I'll be drunk with those that have the Fear of God, and not with drunken Knaves.

Eva. So Got udg me, this is a virtuous Mind.

Fal. You hear all these Matters deny'd, Gentlemen, you hear it.

Enter Mistress Anne Page, with Wine.

Page. Nay, Daughter, carry the Wine in; we'll drink within.

Slon. Oh Heav'n! this is Mistress *Anne Page*.

Enter Mistress Ford and Mistress Page.

Page. How now Mistress *Ford*.

Fal. Mistress *Ford*, by my Troth you are very well met; by your leave, good Mistress.

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Page. Wife, bid these Gentlemen Welcome : Come, we have a hot Venison Pasty to Dinner : Come, Gentlemen, I hope we shall drink down all Unkindness.

[*Ex. Fal. Page, &c.*
Manent Shallow, Evans and Slender.

Slender. I had rather than forty Shillings, I had my Book of Songs and Sonnets here.

Enter Simple.
 How now, *Simple*, where have you been ? I must wait on my self, must I ? You have not the Book of Riddles about you, have you ?

Simple. Book of Riddles ! Why, did you not lend it to *Alice Short-cake* upon *Allhallowmas* last, a Fortnight afore *Michaelmas* ?

Shallow. Come Coz, come Coz ; we stay for you : A word with you Coz : Marry this, Coz ; there is, as 'twere, a Tender, a kind of Tender, made afar off by *Sir Hugh* here : Do you understand me ?

Slender. Ay Sir, you shall find me reasonable : If it be so, I shall do that is Reason.

Shallow. Nay, but understand me.

Slender. So I do, Sir.

Eva. Give Ear to his Motions, *Mr. Slender* : I will description the Matter to you, if you be Capacity of it.

Slender. Nay, I will do as my Cousin *Shallow* says : I pray you pardon me : he's a Justice of Peace in his Country, simple tho' I stand here.

Eva. But that is not the Question : The Question is concerning your Marriage.

Shallow. Ay, there's the point, Sir.

Eva. Marry is it ; the very Point of it, to *Mrs. Anne Page*.

Slender. Why, if it be so, I will marry her upon any reasonable Demands.

Eva. But can you affection the 'oman ? Let us command to know that of your Mouth, or of your Lips. For divers Philosophers hold, that the Lips is Parcel of the Mouth : Therefore precisely, can you marry your good Will to the Maid ?

Shallow. Cousin *Abraham Slender*, can you love her ?

Slender. I hope, Sir ; I will do as it shall become one that would do Reason.

Eva.

Eva. Nay, Got's Lords and his Ladies, you must speak possible, if you can carry her your Desires towards her.

Shal. That you must :

Will you, upon good Dowry, marry her ?

Slen. I will do a greater thing than that upon your Request, Cousin, in any Reason.

Shal. Nay, conceive me, conceive me, sweet Coz, what I do is to pleasure you, Coz : Can you love the Maid ?

Slen. I will marry her, Sir, at your Request : But if there be no great Love in the beginning, yet Heav'n may decrease it upon better Acquaintance, when we are marry'd, and have more occasion to know one another ; I hope upon Familiarity will grow more Content : But if you say, marry her, I will marry her, that I am freely dissolved, and dissolutely.

Eva. It is a fery discretion Answer ; save the fall is in th' Ort dissolutely : The Ort is, according to our meaning, resolutely ; his Meaning is good.

Shal. Ay, I think my Cousin meant well.

Slen. Ay, or else I would I might be hang'd, is.

Enter Mrs. Anne Page.

Shal. Here comes fair Mrs. Anne : Would I were Young for your sake, Mistress Anne.

Anne. The Dinner is on the Table ; my Father desires your Worship's Company.

Shal. I will wait on him, fair Mistress Anne.

Eva. Od's pless'd Will, I will not be absence at the Grace.

[*Ex. Shallow and Evans.*]

Anne. Will't please your Worship to come in, Sir ?

Slen. No, I thank you Forsooth heartily, I am very well.

Anne. The Dinner attends you, Sir.

Slen. I am not a-hungry, I thank you Forsooth : Go, Sirrah, for all you are my Man, go wait upon my Cousin Shallow ; a Justice of Peace sometime may be beholding to his Friend for a Man. I keep but three Men and a Boy yet, 'till my Mother be dead ; but what though, yet I live a poor Gentleman born.

Anne. I may not go in without your Worship, they will not sit 'till you come.

Slen. I'faith, I'll eat nothing ; I thank you as much as though I did.

The Merry Wives

Anne. I pray you, Sir, walk in.

Slm. I had rather walk here, I thank you : I breis'd my Shin th' other Day, with playing at Sword and Dagger with a Master of Fence, three Vearys for a Dish of new'd Prunes, and by my troth I cannot abide the smell of hot Meat since. Why do your Dogs bark so? be there Bears i'th' Town?

Anne. I think there are, Sir, I heard them talk'd of.

Slm. I love the Sport well, but I shall as soon quarrel at it as any Man in England. You are afraid if you see the Bear loose, are you not?

Anne. Ay indeed, Sir.

Slm. That's Meat and Drink to me now ; I have seen Sackerson loose twenty times, and have taken him by the Chain ; but, I warrant you, the Women have so cry'd and shriekt at it, that it past : But Women indeed cannot abide 'em, they are very ill-favour'd rough things.

Enter Mr. Page.

Page. Come, gentle Mr. Slender, come ; we stay for you.

Slm. I'll eat nothing, I thank you, Sir.

Page. By Cock and Pye you shall not chuse, Sir ; come, come.

Slm. Nay, pray you lead the Way.

Page. Come on, Sir.

Slm. Mistress Anne, your self shall go first.

Anne. Not I, Sir, pray you keep on.

Slm. Truly I will not go first, truly-la : I will not do you that wrong.

Anne. I pray you, Sir.

Slm. I'll rather be unmannerly than troublesome ; you do your self wrong, indeed-la. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

Enter Evans and Simple.

Eva. Go your ways, and ask of Doctor Cains House which is the Way ; and there dwells one Mistress Quickly, which is in the manner of his Nurse, or his dry Nurse, or his Cook, or his Laundry, his Washer, and his Ringers.

Simp. Well, Sir.

Eva.

Eva. Nay, it is petter yet ; give her this Letter ; for it is a 'oman that altogether Acquaintance with Mistress *Anne Page* ; and the Letter is to desire and require her to solicit your Master's Desires to Mistress *Anne Page* : I pray you be gone ; I will make an end of my Dinner ; there's Pippins and Cheese to come. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Enter Falstaff, Host, Bardolph, Nym, Pistol and Robin.

Fal. Mine Host of the Garter.

Host. What says my Bully *Rooke* ? speak schollarly, and wisely.

Fal. Truly, mine Host, I must turn away some of my Followers.

Host. Discard, Bully *Hercules*, cashier ; let them wag, trot, trot.

Fal. I fit at ten Pounds a Week.

Host. Thou'rt an Emperor, *Cesar*, *Keisar* and *Phœazar*. I will entertain *Bardolph*, he will draw, he will tap ; said I well, Bully *Hector* ?

Fal. Do so, good mine Host.

Host. I have spoke, let him follow ; let me see thee froth and live : I am at a word ; follow. [*Exit Host.*]

Fal. *Bardolph*, follow him, a Tapster is a good Trade ; an old Cloak makes a new Jerkin ; a wither'd Serving-Man, a fresh Tapster ; go, adieu.

Bard. It is a Life that I have desir'd : I will thrive. [*Exit Bard.*]

Pist. O base *Hungarian* Wight, wilt thou the Spigot wield ?

Nym. He was gotten in Drink ; is not the Humour conceited ?

Fal. I am glad I am so acquit of this Tinderbox ; his Thefts were too open, his Filching was like an unskilful Singer, he kept not Time.

Nym. The good Humour is to steal at a Minute's rest.

Pist. Convey, the Wife it call : Steal ? foh, a fico for the Phrase.

Fal. Well, Sirs, I am almost out at Heels.

Pist. Why then let Kibes ensue.

Fal.

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Fal. There is no remedy: I must conicatch, I must shift.

Pist. Young Ravens must have Food.

Fal. Which of you know *Ford* of this Town?

Pist. I ken the Wight, he is of Substance good.

Fal. My honest Lads, I will tell you what I am about.

Pist. Two Yards and more.

Fal. No Quips now, *Pistol*: Indeed I am in the Waste two Yards about; but I am now about no Waste, I am about Thrift. Briefly, I do mean to make Love to *Ford's* Wife: I spy Entertainment in her; she discourses, she carves, she gives the Leer of Invitation; I can construe the Action of her familiar Stile, and the hardest Voice of her Behaviour, to be english'd right, is, *I am Sir John Falstaff's*.

Pist. He hath study'd her Will, and translated her Will, out of Honesty into *English*.

Nym. The Anchor is deep; will that Humour pass?

Fal. Now, the Report goes, she has all the Rule of her Husband's Purse: He hath a Legion of Angels.

Pist. As many Devils entertain; and to her, Boy, say I.

Nym. The Humour rises; it is good; humour me the Angels.

Fal. I have writ me here a Letter to her; and here another to *Page's* Wife, who even now gave me good Eyes too, examin'd my Parts with most judicious *Illiads*, sometimes the Beam of her View guided my Foot, sometimes my portly Belly.

Pist. Then did the Sun on *Dung-hill* shine.

Nym. I thank thee for that Humour.

Fal. O she did so course o'er my Exteriors with such a greedy Intention, that the Appetite of her Eye did seem to scorch me up like a Burning-Glass: Here's another Letter to her; she bears the Purse too; she is a Region in *Guiana*, all Gold and Bounty. I will be Cheaters to them both, and they shall be *Exchequers* to me; they shall be my *East* and *West-Indies*, and I will trade to them both. Go, bear thou this Letter to Mistress *Page*, and thou this to Mistress *Ford*: We will thrive, Lads, we will thrive.

Pist. Shall I Sir *Pandarus* of *Troy* become;
And by my Side wear Steel? Then *Lucifer* take all.

Nym.

Nym. I will run no base Humour: Here take the Humour-Letter, I will keep the Haviour of Reputation.

Fal. Hold, Sirrah, bear you these Letters rightly, Sail like my Pinnacle to these golden Shores.

Rogues, hence, avaunt, vanish like Hail-stones; go,

Trudge, plod away o'th' hoof, seek shelter, pack:

Falstaff will learn the Honour of the Age,

French Thrift, you Rogues, my self, and skirted *Page*.

[*Exit Falstaff and Boy*]

Pist. Let Vultures gripe thy Guts; for Gourd, and *Tul-lam* holds; and high and low beguiles the rich and poor. Tester I'll have in Pouch when thou shalt lack, Base *Phrygian Turk*.

Nym. I have Operations, Which be Humours of Revenge.

Pist. Wilt thou revenge?

Nym. By Welkin and her Star.

Pist. With Wit, or Steel?

Nym. With both the Humours, I: I will discuss the Humour of this Love to *Ford*.

Pist. And I to *Page* shall eke unfold How *Falstaff*, Varlet vile, His Dove will prove, his Gold will hold, And his soft Couch defile.

Nym. My Humour shall not cool; I will incense *Ford* to deal with Poison, I will possess him with Yellowness, for the Revolt of mine is dangerous: That is my true Humour.

Pist. Thou art the Mars of *Male contents*: I second thee; troop on.

[*Exeunt*]

S C E N E IV.

Enter Mistress Quickly, Simple, and John Rugby.

Quic. What, *John Rugby*? I pray thee go to the Casement, and see if you can see my Master, Master Doctor *Caus*, coming; if he do, I'faith, and find any body in the House, here will be an old abusing of God's Patience, and the King's English.

Rug. I'll go watch. [Exit Rugby.]

Quic. Go, and we'll have a Posset for't soon at Night, in Faith, at the latter end of a Sea-coal Fire: An honest, willing,

willing, kind Fellow, as ever Servant shall come in House withal, and I warrant you no Tell-tale, nor no Breed-bate; his worst Fault is that he is given to Pray'r, he is something peevish that way; but no body but has his Fault; but let that pass. *Peter Simple* you say your Name is.

Simp. Ay, for fault of a better.

Quic. And Master *Slender's* your Master?

Simp. Ay, Forsooth.

Quic. Does he not wear a great round Beard, like a Glover's Pairing-knife?

Simp. No, Forsooth; he hath but a little Wee-face, with a little yellow Beard, a Cane-colour'd Beard.

Quic. A softly-sprighted Man, is he not?

Simp. Ay, Forsooth; but he is as tall a Man of his Hands, as any is between this and his Head; he hath fought with a Warrener.

Quic. How say you? Oh, I should remember him; does he not hold up his Head, as it were? And strut in his Gate?

Simp. Yes indeed does he.

Quic. Well, Heav'n send *Anne Page* no worse Fortune. Tell Master Person *Evans*, I will do what I can for your Master: *Anne* is a good Girl, and I wish——

Enter Rugby.

Rug. Out, alas! here comes my Master.

Quic. We shall all be shent; run in here, good young Man; go into this Closet; [*Shuts Simple in the Closet.*] He will not stay long. What, *John Rugby*! *John*! What *John*, I say; go *John*, go enquire for my Master, I doubt he be not well, that he comes not home: and down, down, a-down'a; &c.

Enter Doctor Caius.

Caius. Vat is you sing? I do not like des Toys; pray you go and vetch me in my Closet, an *boitier verd*; a Box, a green-a Box; do intend vat I speak? a green-a Box.

Quic. Ay Forsooth, I'll fetch it you.

I am glad he went not in himself; if he had found the young Man, he would have been horn-mad.

Caius. Fe, fe, fe, fe, ma foi. Il fait fort chaud, je m'en vais a la Cour——la grande Affaire.

Quic.

Quic. Is it this Sir?

Caius. Ouy, mette le au mon Pocket, Depêch Quickly:
Ver is dat Knave Rugby?

Quic. What, John Rugby! John!

Rug. Here Sir.

Caius. You are John Rugby, and you are Jack Rugby;
come, take-a your Rapier, and come after my Heel to
the Court.

Rug. 'Tis ready, Sir, here in the Porch.

Caius. By my Trot I tarry too long: Od's me: *Que ay
je oublié*: Dere is some Simples in my Closet, dat I will
not for the World I shall leave behind.

Quic. Ay-me, he'll find the young Man there, and be
mad.

Caius. O Diable, Diable; vat is in my Closet?
Villanie, Larron! Rugby, my Rapier.

Quic. Good Master be content.

Caius. Wherefore should I be content-a?

Quic. The young Man is an honest Man.

Caius. What shall de honest Man do in my Closet? dere
is no honest Man dat shall come in my Closet.

Quic. I beseech you be not so flegmatick; hear the
truth of it. He came of an Erraud to me from Parson
Hugh.

Caius. Vell.

Simp. Ay Forsooth, to desire her to—

Quic. Peace, I pray you.

Caius. Peace-a your Tongue, speak-a your Tale.

Simp. To desire this honest Gentlewoman, your Maid,
to speak a good Word to Mistress Anne Page for my Ma-
ster in the way of Marriage.

Quic. This is all indeed-la; but I'll ne'er put my Fin-
ger in the Fire, and need not.

Caius. Sir Hugh send-a-you? Rugby, ballow me some
Paper; tarry you a little-a-while.

Quic. I am glad he is so quiet; if he had been through-
ly moved, you should have heard him so loud, and so me-
lancholly: But notwithstanding, Man, I'll do for your Ma-
ster what good I can; and the very yes, and the no is,
the French Doctor my Master, I may call him my Master,
look you, for I keep his House, and I wash, wring, brew,
bake,

bake, scour, dress Meat and Drink, make the Beds, and do all my self.

Simp. 'Tis a great Charge to come under one body's Hand.

Quic. Are you a-vis'd o'that? you shall find it a great Charge; and to be up early, and down late. But notwithstanding, to tell in your Ear, I would have no words of it, my Master himself is in Love with Mistress *Anne Page*; but notwithstanding that, I know *Anne's* Mind, that's neither here nor there.

Caius. You, Jack'Nape; give'a this Letter to Sir *Hugh*, by gar it is a Shallenge: I will cut his Troat in de Parke, and I will teach a scurvy Jack-a-nape Priest to meddle or make.—You may begone, it is not good you tarry here; by gar I will cut all his two Stones, by gar, he shall not have a Stone to trow at his Dog. [Exit Simple.

Quic. Alas, he speaks but for his Friend.

Caius. It is no matter'a ver dat: do you not tell-a me dat I shall have *Anne Page* for my self? by gar, I will kill de Jack Priest; and I have appointed mine Host of *de Fartere* to measure our Weapon; By gar I will my self have *Anne Page*.

Quic. Sir, the Maid loves you, and all shall be well: We must give Folks leave to prate; what the good-ger.

Caius. *Rugby*, come to the Court with me; by gar, if I have not *Anne Page*, I shall turn your Head out of my Door; follow my Heels, *Rugby*. [Ex. Caius and Rugby.

Quic. You shall have *An* Fools-head of your own. No, I know *Anne's* Mind for that; never a Woman in *Windfor* knows more of *Anne's* Mind than I do, nor can do more than I do with her, I thank Heav'n.

Fent. [within] Who's within there, ho?

Quic. Who's there, I trow? Come near the House, I pray you.

Enter Mr. Fenton.

Fent. How now, good Woman, how dost thou?

Quic. The better that it pleases your good Worship to ask.

Fent. What News? How does pretty Mistress *Anne*?

Quic.

Quic. In truth Sir, and she is pretty, and honest, and gentle, and one that is your Friend, I can tell you that by the Way, I praise Heav'n for it.

Fent. Shall I do any good, think'st thou? shall I not lose my Suit?

Quic. Troth, Sir, all is in his Hands above; but notwithstanding, Master Fenton, I'll be sworn on a Book she loves you: Have not your Worship a Wart above your Eye?

Fent. Yes, marry have I; and what of that?

Quic. Well, thereby hangs a Tale; good Faith, it is such another Nan; but, I detest, an honest Maid as ever broke Bread; we had an Hour's talk of that Wart: I shall never laugh but in that Maid's Company! but, indeed, she is given too much to Allicholly and Musing; but for you — Well — go to —

Fent. Well, I shall see her to Day; hold, there's Money for thee: Let me have thy Voice in my behalf; if thou seest her before me, commend me. —

Quic. Will I? Ay faith that we will: And I will tell your Worship more of the Wart, the next time we have confidence, and of other Wooers.

Fent. Well, farewell, I am in great haste now. [Exit.]

Quic. Farewell to your Worship. Truly an honest Gentleman, but Anne loves him not; I know Anne's Mind as well as another does. Out upon't, what have I forgot? [Exit.]

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Mistress Page with a Letter.

Mrs. Page. **W**HAT have I escap'd Love-Letters in the Holy-day-time of my Beauty, and am now a Subject for them? let me see:

Ask me no Reason why I love you; for tho' Love use Reason for his Precisian, he admits him not for his Counsellor: You are not young, no more am I; go to then, there's Sympathy: You are merry, so am I; ha! ha! that there's more Sympathy: You love Sack, and so do I; would you desire but

'er Sympathy? Let it suffice thee, Mistress Page, at the least if the Love of a Soldier can suffice, that I love thee. I will not say, Pity me, 'tis not a Soldier-like Phrase; but I say, Love me:

*By me, thine own true Knight, by Day or Night,
Or any kind of Lights, with all his Might,
For thee to fight.*

John Falstaff.

What a Herod of Jewry is this? O wicked, wicked World! One that is well nigh worn to pieces with Age, To show himself a young Gallant? What unwayed Behaviour hath this *Flemish* Drunkard picht, I th' Devil's Name, out of my Conversation, that he dares in this manner assay me? Why, he hath not been thrice in my Company: What should I say to him? I was then frugal of my Mirth, Heav'n forgive me: Why, I'll exhibit a Bill in the Parliament for the putting down of Men; how shall I be reveng'd on him? for reveng'd I will be, as sure as his Guts are made of Puddings.

Enter Mrs. Ford.

Mrs. Ford. Mistress Page, trust me, I was going to your House.

Mrs. Page. And trust me, I was coming to you; you look very ill.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I'll ne'er believe that; I have to shew to the contrary.

Mrs. Page. Faith you do, in my Mind.

Mrs. Ford. Well, I do then; yet I say, I could shew you to the contrary: O Mistress Page, give me some Counsel.

Mrs. Page. What's the matter, Woman?

Mrs. Ford. O Woman! if it were not for one trifling Respect, I could come to such Honour.

Mrs. Page. Hang the Trifle, Woman, take the Honour; What is it? dispense with Trifles; what is it?

Mrs. Ford. If I would but go to Hell for an eternal Moment, or so, I could be knighted.

Mrs. Page. What, thou liest! Sir *Alice Ford*! these Knights will back, and so thou shouldst not alter the Article of thy Gentry.

Mrs. Ford. We burn Day-light, here; read, read, perceive how I might be knighted: I shall think the worse of

of fat Men as long as I have an Eye to make difference of Men's liking; and yet he would not swear, praise Women's Modesty, and gave such orderly and well-behaved Reproof to all Uncomeliness, that I would have sworn his Disposition would have gone to the Truth of his Words; but they do no more adhere, and keep Place together, than the hundredth Psalm to the Tune of *Green Sleeves*. What Tempest, I trow, threw this Whale, with so many Tun of Oyl in his Belly, a' shore at *Windsor*? How shall I be reveng'd on him? I think the best way were to entertain him with Hope, 'till the wicked Fire of Lust have melted him in his own Grease. Did you ever hear the like?

Mrs. Page. Letter for Letter, but that the Name of *Page* and *Ford* differs. To thy great Comfort in this mystery of ill Opinions, here's the Twin-brother of thy Letter; but let thine inherit first, for I protest mine ever shall. I warrant he hath a thousand of these Letters, writ with blank-space for different Names, nay more; and these are of the second Edition: He will print them out of doubt, for he cares not what he puts into the Press, when he would put us two. I had rather be a Giantess, and lye under *Mount-Pelion*. Well, I will find you twenty lascivious Turtles, e'er one chaste Man.

Mrs. Ford. Why, this is the very same, the very Hand, the very Words; what doth he think of us?

Mrs. Page. Nay, I know not; it makes me almost ready to wrangle with mine own Honesty. I'll entertain my self like one that I am not acquainted withal; for sure unless he knew some Strain in me, that I know not my self, he would never have boarded me in this Fury!

Mrs. Ford. Boarding, call it you? I'll be sure to keep him above Deck.

Mrs. Page. So will I; if he come under my Hatchet, I'll never to Sea again. Let's be reveng'd on him, let's appoint him a Meeting, give him a show of Comfort in his Suit, and lead him on with a fine baited Delay, 'till he hath pawn'd his Horses to mine Host of the Garter.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I will consent to set any Villany against him that may not sully the Charities of our Honesty:

Oh

Oh that my Husband saw this Letter, it would give eternal Food to his Jealousie.

Mrs. Page. Why, look where he comes, and my good Man too; he's as far from Jealousie as I am from giving him Cause, and that, I hope, is an unmeasurable Distance.

Mrs. Ford. You are the happier Woman.

Mrs. Page. Let's consult together against this greasie Knight. Come hither.

Enter Ford with Pistol, Page with Nym.

Ford. Well, I hope it be not so.

Pist. Hope is a Curtal-dog in some Affairs.

Sir John affects thy Wife.

Ford. Why, Sir, my Wife is not young.

Pist. He woos both high and low, both rich and poor, both young and old, and one with another, Ford; he loves thy Gally-mawfry, Ford, perpend.

Ford. Love my Wife?

Pist. With Liver burning hot: Prevent, Or go thou, like Sir Acton, with

Ring-wood at thy Heels: O, odious is the Name.

Ford. What Name, Sir?

Pist. The Horn, I say: Farewel.

Take heed, have open Eye; for Thieves do foot by Night. Take heed e'er Summer comes, or Cuckoo-birds do sing. Away, Sir Corporal Nym.

Believe it, Page, he speaks Sense. [Exit Pistol.

Ford. I will be patient; I will find out this.

Nym. And this is true: I like not the Humour of lying; he hath wrong'd me in some Humours: I should have born the humour'd Letter to her; but I have a Sword, and it shall bite upon my Necessity. He loves your Wife; there's the short and the long. My Name is Corporal Nym; I speak, and I avouch; 'tis true; my Name is Nym, and Falstaff loves your Wife. Adieu; I love not the Humour of Bread and Cheese: Adieu. [Exit Nym.

Page. The Humour of it, quoth'a? here's a Fellow frights English out of his Wits.

Ford. I will seek out Falstaff.

Page. I never heard such a drawling, affecting Rogue.

Ford. If I do find it: Well.

Page.

Page. I will not believe such a *Cataian*, tho' the Priest
o' th' Town commended him for a true Man.

Ford. 'Twas a good sensible Fellow : Well.

Page. How now, *Meg* ?

Mrs. Page. Whither go you, *George* ? hark you.

Mrs. Ford. How now, sweet *Frank*, why art thou melancholly ?

Ford. I melancholy ! I am not melancholy.
Get you home, go.

Mrs. Ford. Faith thou hast some Crotchets in thy Head.
Now will you go, Mistress *Page* ?

Mrs. Page. Have with you. You'll come to Dinner
George ? Look who comes yonder ; she shall be our Mes-
senger to this paultry Knight.

Enter Mistress Quickly.

Mrs. Ford. Trust me, I thought on her, she'll fit it.

Mrs. Page. You are come to see my Daughter *Anne* ?

Quic. Ay, Forsooth ; and I pray how does good Mistress
Anne ?

Mrs. Page. Go in with us and see ; we have an Hour's
Talk with you. [*Ex. Mrs. Page, Mrs. Ford, and Mrs. Quic.*]

Page. How now, Master *Ford* ?

Ford. You heard what this Knave told me, did you not ?

Page. Yes ; and you heard what the other told me ?

Ford. Do you think there is truth in them ?

Page. Hang 'em, Slaves, I do not think the Knight would
offer it ; but these that accuse him in his Intent towards
our Wives are a Yoke of his discarded Men, very Rogues
now they be out of Service.

Ford. Were they his Men ?

Page. Marry were they.

Ford. I like it never the better for that.
Does he lye at the *Garret* ?

Page. Ay marry does he. If he should intend his Voy-
age toward my Wife, I would turn her loose to him ;
and what he gets more of her than sharp Words, let it
lye on my Head.

Ford. I do not misdoubt my Wife, but I would be loath
to turn them together ; a Man may be too confident ; I
would have nothing lye on my Head ; I cannot be thus
satisfy'd.

Page.

The Merry Wives

Page. Look where my ranting Host of the Garter comes ; there is either Liquor in his Pate, or Money in his Purse, when he looks so merrily. How now, mine Host ?

Enter Host and Shallow.

Host. How now, Bully Rook ? Thou'rt a Gentleman, Cavaliero-Justice, I say.

Shal. I follow, mine Host, I follow. Good Even, and twenty, good Master *Page*. Master *Page*, will you go with us ? we have Sport in hand.

Host. Tell him, Cavaliero-Justice ; tell him Bully Rook.

Shal. Sir, there is a Fray to be fought between Sir *Hugh*, the *Welch* Priest, and *Caius*, the *French* Doctor.

Ford. Good mine Host o' th' Garter, a Word with you.

Host. What say'st thou, Bully Rook ?

Shal. Will you go with us to behold it ? My merry Host hath had the measuring of their Weapons, and, I think, hath appointed them contrary Places ; for, believe me, I hear the Parson is no Jester. Hark, I will tell you what our Sport shall be.

Host. Hast thou no Suit against my Knight, my Gneft-Cavalier !

Ford. None, I protest ; but I'll give you a Pottle of burnt Sack to give me Recourse to him, and tell him my Name is *Broom* ; only for a Jest.

Host. My Hand, Bully ; thou shalt have Egrefs and Regrets ; said I well ? and thy Name shall be *Broom*. It is a merry Knight. Will you go an-heirs ?

Shal. Have with you, mine Host.

Page. I have heard the *Frenchman* hath good Skill in his Rapier.

Shal. Tut, Sir, I could have told you more ; in these times you stand on Distance, your Passes, Stoccado's, and I know not what : 'Tis the Heart, Master *Page* ; 'tis here, 'tis here. I have seen the time, with my long Sword, I would have made you four tall Fellows skip like Rats.

Host. Here Boys, here, here : Shall we wag ?

Page. Have with you ; I had rather hear them scold than fight.

[*Exeunt Host, Shallow and Page.*]

Ford. Tho' *Page* be a secure Fool, and stand so firmly on his Wife's Frailty, yet I cannot put off my Opinion so easily.

easily. She was in his Company at Page's House, and what they made there I know not. Well, I will look further into't; and I have a Disguise to sound *Falstaff*: If I find her honest, I lose not my Labour; if she be otherwise, 'tis Labour well bestow'd.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.

Enter Falstaff and Pistol.

Fal. I will not lend thee a Penny.

Pist. Why then the World's mine Oyster, which I with Sword will open.

Fal. Not a Penny. I have been content, Sir, you should lay my Countenance to Pawn; I have grated upon my good Friends for three Reprieves for you, and your Coach-fellow, *Nim*; or else you had look'd through the Grate, like a Geminy of Baboons. I am damn'd in Hell for swearing to Gentlemen, my Friends, you were good Soldiers, and tall Fellows. And when Mistress *Bridget* lost the Handle of her Fan, I took't upon mine Honour thou hadst it not.

Pist. Didst thou not share? Hadst thou not fifteen Pence?

Fal. Reason, you Rogue, Reason: Think'st thou I'll endanger my Soul gratis? At a Word; hang no more about me, I am no Gibbet for you: Go, a short Knife, and a Throng, to your Manner of *Picks, hatches*; go, you'll not bear a Letter for me, you Rogue; you stand upon your Honour? Why, thou unconfinable Baseness, it is as much as I can do to keep the Term of my Honour precise, I, I, I my self sometimes, leaving the Fear of Heaven on the left Hand, and hiding my Honour in my Necessity, am fain to shuffle, to hedge, and to lurch; and yet, you Rogue will ensconce your Rags, your Cat-a-Mountain Looks, your Red Lettice Phrases, and your bold-beating Oaths, under the Shelter of your Honour! You will not do it, you!

Pist. I do relent; what wouldst thou more of Man?

Enter Robin.

Rob. Sir, here's a Woman would speak with you.

Fal. Let her approach.

Enter

Enter Mistress Quickly.

Quic. Give your Worship Good-morrow.

Fal. Good-morrow, good Wife.

Quic. Not so, and't please your Worship.

Fal. Good Maid then.

Quic. I'll be sworn,

As my Mother was the first Hour I was born.

Fal. I do believe the Swearer : What with me ?

Quic. Shall I vouchsafe your Worship a Word or two ?

Fal. Two thousand, fair Woman, and I'll vouchsafe thee the hearing.

Quic. There is one Mistress Ford, Sir : I pray come a little nearer this ways : I my self dwell with Mr. Doctor Caius.

Fal. Well, on : Mistress Ford, you say.

Quic. Your Worship says very true : I pray your Worship come a little nearer this ways.

Fal. I warrant thee no body hears : mine own People, mine own People.

Quic. Are they so ? Heav'n bless them, and make them his Servants.

Fal. Well : Mistress Ford, what of her ?

Quic. Why, Sir, she's a good Creature. Lord, Lord, your Worship's a Wanton ; well, Heav'n forgive you, and all of us, I pray-----

Fal. Mistress Ford, come, Mistress Ford-----

Quic. Marry this is the short and the long of it ; you have brought her into such a Canaries as 'tis wonderful : The best Courtier of them all, when the Court lay at Windsor, could never have brought her to such a Canary. Yet there has been Knights, and Lords, and Gentlemen, with their Coaches ; I warrant you Coach after Coach, Letter after Letter, Gift after Gift, smelling so sweetly ; all Musk ; and so rushing, I warrant you in Silk and Gold, and in such aligant Terms, and in such Wine and Sugar of the best, and the fairest, that would have won any Woman's Heart ; and I warrant you they could never get an Eye-wink of her. I had my self twenty Angels given me this Morning ; but I despise all Angels, in any such sort as they say, but in the way of Honesty ; and I warrant you they could never get her so much as

tip

sip on a Cup with the proudest of them all; and yet there has been Earls, nay, which is more, Pensioners; but I warrant you all is one with her.

Fal. But what says she to me? Be brief, my good she-Mercury.

Quic. Marry, she hath receiv'd your Letter, for the which she thanks you a thousand times; and she gives you to notify, that her Husband will be absence from his House between ten and eleven.

Fal. Ten and eleven.

Quic. Ay, Forsooth; and then you may come and see the Picture, she says, that you wor of: Master *Ford*, her Husband, will be from home. Alas! the sweet Woman leads an ill Life with him, he's a very jealousie-Man; she leads a very frampold Life with him, good Heart.

Fal. Ten and eleven:

Woman, commend me to her, I will not fail her.

Quic. Why, you say well: But I have another Messenger to your Worship; Mistress *Page* has her hearty Commendations to you too; and let me tell you in your Ear, she's as fartuous a civil modest Wife, and one (I tell you) that will not miss you Morning and Evening Prayer, as any is in *Windsor*, whoe'er be the other; and she bad me tell your Worship that her Husband is seldom from home, but she hopes there will come a time. I never knew a Woman so doat upon a Man; surely I think you have Charms, la; yes in Truth

Fal. Not I, I assure thee; setting the Attraction of my good Parts aside, I have no other Charms.

Quic. Blessing on your Heart for't.

Fal. But I pray thee tell me this; has *Ford's* Wife and *Page's* Wife acquainted each other how they love me?

Quic. That were a Jest indeed; they have not so little Grace, I hope; that were a Trick indeed! But Mistress *Page* would desire you to send her your little *Page*, of all Loves: Her Husband has a marvellous Infection to the little *Page*; and truly Master *Page* is an honest Man. Never a Wife in *Windsor* leads a better Life than she does; do what she will, say what she will, take all, pay all, go to Bed when she list, rise when she list, all is as she will; and truly she deserves it, for if there be a kind Woman

in *Windsor*, truly she is one. You must send her your Page; no Remedy.

Fal. Why, I will.

Quic. Nay, but do so then; and, look you, he may come and go between you both; and, in any case, have a Nay-word, that you may know one anothers Mind, and the Boy never need to understand any thing; for 'tis not good that Children should know any Wickedness: Old Folks, you know, have Discretion, as they say, and know the World.

Fal. Fare thee well; commend me to them both: There's my Purse, I am yet thy Debtor. Boy, go along with this Woman. This News distracts me. [*Ex. Quic. and Robin.*]

Pist. This Punk is one of *Cupid's* Carriers:

Clap on more Sails; pursue; up with your Fights;
Give Fire; she is my Prize, or Ocean whelm them all.

[*Exit Pistol.*]

Fal. Say'st thou so, old *Jack*? go thy ways; I'll make more of thy old Body than I have done; will they yet look after thee? Wilt thou, after the Expence of so much Money, be now a Gainer? Good body; I thank thee; let them say, 'tis grossly done, so it be fairly done, no matter.

Enter Bardolph.

Bard. Sir *John*, there's one Master *Broom* below would fain speak with you, and be acquainted with you; and hath sent your Worship a Morning's Draught of Sack.

Fal. *Broom* is his Name?

Bard. Ay, Sir.

Fal. Call him in; such *Brooms* are welcome to me that o'erflows such Liquor. Ah! ah! Mistress *Ford* and Mistress *Page*, have I encompass'd you? Go to, *wis*.

Enter Ford disguis'd.

Ford. Bless you, Sir.

Fal. And you, Sir; would you speak with me?

Ford. I make bold to press with so little Preparation upon you.

Fal. You're welcome; what's your Will? Give us leave, Drawer.

Ford. Sir, I am a Gentleman that have spent much; my Name is *Broom*.

Fal. Good Master *Broom*, I desire more Acquaintance of you.

Ford.

Ford. Good Sir *John*, I sue for yours; not to charge you; for I must let you understand, I think my self in better Plight for a Lender than you are, the which hath something embolden'd me to this unseason'd Intrusion; for they say, if Money go before, all Ways do lye open.

Fal. Money is a good Soldier, Sir, and will on.

Ford. Troth, and I have a Bag of Money here troubles me; if you will help to bear it, Sir *John*, take all, or half, for easrag me of the Carriage.

Fal. Sir, I know not how I may deserve to be your Porter.

Ford. I will tell you, Sir, if you will give me the hearing.

Fal. Speak, good Master *Broom*, I shall be glad to be your Servant.

Ford. Sir, I hear you are a Scholar, I will be brief with you, and you have been a Man long known to me, tho' I had never so good Means as Desire to make my self acquainted with you: I shall discover a thing to you, wherein I must very much lay open mine own Imperfections; but, good Sir *John*, as you have one Eye upon my Follies, as you hear them unfolded, turn another into the Register of your own, that I may pass with a Re-proof the easier, sith you your self know how easie it is to be such an Offender.

Fal. Very well, Sir, proceed.

Ford. There is a Gentlewoman in this Town, her Husband's Name is *Ford*.

Fal. Well, Sir.

Ford. I have long lov'd her, and, I protest to you, bestow'd much on her, follow'd her with a doating Observance, ingross'd Opportunities to meet her, see'd every slight Occasion that could but niggardly give me sight of her; not only bought many Presents to give her, but have given largely to many, to know what she would have given: Briefly, I have pursu'd her, as Love hath pursu'd me, which hath been on the Wing of all Occasions. But whatsoever I have merited, either in my Mind, or in my Means, Meed I am sure I have received none, unless Experience be a Jewel I have purchas'd at an infinite rate, and that hath taught me to say this;

*" Love like a Shadow flies when Substance Love pursues ;
 " Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues.*

Fal. Have you receiv'd no Promise of Satisfaction at her Hands ?

Ford. Never.

Fal. Have you importun'd her to such a Purpose ?

Ford. Never.

Fal. Of what Quality was your Love then ?

Ford. Like a fair House built on another Man's Ground, so that I have lost my Edifice, by mistaking the Place where I erected it.

Fal. To what purpose have you unfolded this to me ?

Ford. When I have told you that, I have told you all. Some say, that tho' she appear honest to me, yet in other Places she enlargeth her Mirth so far, that there is shrewd Construction made of her. Now, Sir *John*, here is the Heart of my Purpose : You are a Gentleman of excellent Breeding, admirable Discourse, of great Admittance, authentick in your Place and Person, generally allow'd for your many War-like, Court-like and learned Preparations.

Fal. O Sir !

Ford. Believe it, for you know it; there is Money, spend it, spend it ; spend more, spend all I have, only give me so much of your Time in exchange of it, as to lay an amiable Siege to the Honesty of this *Ford's* Wife ; use your Art of Wooing, win her to consent to you ; if any Man may, you may as soon as any.

Fal. Would it apply well to the Vehemence of your Affection, that I should win what you would enjoy ? Methinks you prescribe to your self very preposterously.

Ford. O, understand my drift ; she dwells so securely on the Excellency of her Honour, that the Folly of my Soul dares not present it self ; she is too bright to be look'd against. Now could I come to her with any Detection in my Hand, my Desires had Instance and Argument to commend themselves ; I could drive her then from the Ward of her Purity, her Reputation, her Marriage-Vow, and a thousand other Defences, which now are too strongly embattail'd against me. What say you to't, Sir *John* ?

Fal. Master *Broom*, I will first make bold with your Money ; next, give me your Hand ; and last, as I am a Gentle-

Gentleman, you shall, if you will, enjoy *Ford's* Wife.

Ford. O good Sir!

Fal. I say; you shall.

Ford. Want no Money, Sir *John*, you shall want none.

Fal. Want no Mistress *Ford*; Master *Broom*, you shall want none; I shall be with her, I may tell you, by her own Appointment. Even as you came into me, her Assistant, or Go-between, parted from me; I say, I shall be with her between ten and eleven; for at that time the jealous rascally Knave, her Husband, will be forth; come you to me at Night, you shall know how I speed.

Ford. I am blest in your Acquaintance: Do you know *Ford*, Sir?

Fal. Hang him, poor cuckoldy Knave, I know him not: Yet I wrong him, to call him poor; they say, the jealous wittolly Knave hath masses of Money, for the which his Wife seems to me well-favour'd. I will use her as the Key of the Cuckold-Rogue's Coffer; and there's my Harvest home.

Ford. I would you knew *Ford*, Sir, that you might avoid him, if you saw him.

Fal. Hang him, mechanical salt-butter Rogue; I will stare him out of his Wits; I will awe him with my Cudgel; it shall hang like a Meteor o'er the Cuckold's Horns. Master *Broom*, thou shalt know I will predominate over the Pesant, and thou shalt lye with his Wife: Come to me soon at Night; *Ford's* a Knave, and I will aggravate his Stile: Thou, Master *Broom*, shalt know him for Knave and Cuckold: come to me soon at Night. [Exit.

Ford. What a damn'd Epicurean Rascal is this! My Heart is ready to crack with Impatience. Who say's this is improvident Jealousie? My Wife hath sent to him, the Hour is fixt, the March is made; Would any Man have thought this? See the Hell of having a false Woman; my Bed shall be abus'd, my Coffers ransack'd, my Reputation gnawn at, and I shall not only receive this villainous Wrong, but stand under the adoption of abominable Terms, and by him that does me the Wrong. Terms, Names; *Amainon* sounds well, *Lucifer* well, *Barbason* well, yet they are Devils additions, the Names of Fiends; but Cuckold, Wittol, Cuckold! the Devil himself hath not

such a Name. *Page* is an Afs, a secure Afs, he will trust his Wife; he will not be jealous: I will rather trust a *Fleming* with my Butter, *Parson Hugh*, the *Welchman*, with my Cheese, an *Irish-man* with my *Aqua-vita* Bottle, or a Thief to walk my ambling Gelding, than my Wife with her self: Then she plots, then she ruminates, then she devises; and what they think in their Hearts they may effect, they will break their Hearts but they will effect. Heav'n be prais'd for my Jealousie. Eleven o'Clock the Hour; I will prevent this, detect my Wife, be reveng'd on *Falstaff*, and laugh at *Page*: I will about it; better three Hours too soon than a Minute too late. Fie, fie, fie; Cuckold, Cuckold, Cuckold. [Exit.

SCENE III.

Enter Caius and Rugby.

Caius. *Jack Rugby!*

Rug. Sir.

Caius. Vat is de Clock, *Jack*?

Rug. 'Tis past the Hour, Sir, that *Sir Hugh* promis'd to meet.

Caius. By gar, he has save his Soul, dat he is no come; he has pray his Pible well, dat he is no come: By gar, *Jack Rugby*, he is dead already. if he be come.

Rug. He is wise, Sir; he knew your Worship would kill him, if he came.

Caius. By gar, de Herring is no dead so as I vill kill him; take your Rapier, *Jack*, I vill tell you how I vill kill him.

Rug. Alas, Sir, I cannot fence.

Caius. Villany, take your Rapier.

Rug. Forbear; here's Company.

Enter Host, Shallow, Slender and Page.

Host. 'Bless thee, Bully-Doctor.

Shal. 'Save you, Mr. Doctor.

Page. Now, good Mr. Doctor *Caius*.

Slen. Give you Good-morrow, Sir.

Caius. Vat be all you, one, two, tree, four, come for?

Host. To see thee fight, to see thee foigne, to see thee traverse, to see thee here, to see thee there, to see thee pass

pass thy Puncto, thy Stock, thy Reverse, thy Distance, thy Montant. Is he dead, my *Ethiopian*? Is he dead, my *Francisco*? Ha Bully? What says my *Esculapian*? my *Galen*? My Heart of Elder? Ha? is he dead, Bully-*Stale*? is he dead?

Caius. By gar, he is de Coward *Jack-Priest* of de World; he is not show his Face.

Host. Thou art a *Castalion-king-Urinal*: *Hector* of Greece, my Boy.

Caius. I pray you bear Witness, that me have stay six or seven, two tree Hours for him, and he is no come.

Shal. He is the wiser Man, Mr. Doctor; he is a Curer of Souls, and you a Curer of Bodies: If you should fight, you go against the hair of your Professions: Is it not true, Master *Page*?

Page. Master *Shallow*, you have your self been a great Fighter, tho' now a Man of Peace.

Shal. Body-kins, Mr. *Page*, tho' I now be old, and of Peace, if I see a Sword out, my Finger itches to make one; tho' we are Justices, and Doctors, and Church-men, Mr. *Page*, we have some Salt of our Youth in us; we are the Sons of Women, Mr. *Page*.

Page. 'Tis true, Mr. *Shallow*.

Shal. It will be found so, Mr. *Page*. Mr. Doctor *Caius*, I am come to fetch you home; I am sworn of the Peace; you have shew'd your self a wise Physician, and Sir *Hugh* hath shown himself a wise and patient Church-man: You must go with me, Mr. Doctor.

Host. Pardon, Guest-Justice; a Monsieur Mock-water.

Caius. Mock-vater? Vat is dat?

Host. Mock-water, in our *English* Tongue, is Valour, Bully.

Caius. By gar, then I have as much Mock-water as de *English-man*, Scurvy-Jack-dog-Priest; by gar, me vill cut his Ears.

Host. He will clapper-claw thee tightly, Bully.

Caius. Clapper-de-claw? Vat is dat?

Host. That is, he will make thee amends.

Caius. By gar, me do look he shall clapper-de-claw me; for by gar, me vill have it.

Host. And I will provoke him to't, or let him wag.

Caius. Me tanek you for dat.

Host. And moreover, Bully; but first, Mr. *Guest*, and Mr. *Page*, and cek *Cavalerio Slender*, go you through the Town to *Frogmore*.

Page. Sir *Hugh* is there, is he?

Host. He is there; see what Humour he is in; and I will bring the Doctor about the Fields: Will it do well?

Shal. We will do it.

All. Adieu, good Mr. Doctor. [*Ex. Page, Shal. and Slen.*]

Caius. By gar, me vill kill de Priest; for he speak for a Jac-an-Ape to *Anne Page*.

Host. Let him die; sheath thy Impatience; throw cold Water on thy Choler; go about the Fields with me through *Frogmore*; I will bring thee where Mistress *Anne Page* is, at a Farm-House a feasting, and thou shalt woo her; Cride-game, said I well?

Caius. By gar, me tank you vor dat! By gar I love you; and I will procure 'a you de good Guest; de Earl, de Knight, de Lords, de Gentlemen, my Patients.

Host. For the which I will be thy Adversary toward *Anne Page*: Said I well?

Caius. By gar, 'tis good; vell said.

Host. Let us wag then.

Come at my Heels, *Jack Rugby*.

[*Exeant.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Evans and Simple.

Eva. I Pray you now, good Master *Slender's* Serving-man, and Friend *Simple* by your Name, which way have you look'd for Master *Caius*, that calls himself Doctor of *Physick*?

Simple. Marry Sir, the *Pitty-wary*, the *Park-ward*, every way, old *Windsor* way, and every way but the Town way.

Eva. I most feheemently desire you, you will also look that way.

Simp. I will, Sir.

Eva. 'Pless my Soul, how full of Chollars I am, and tremping of Mind! I shall be glad if he have deceiv'd me; how

how Melanchollies I am! I will knog his Urinals about his Knaves Costard, when I have good Opportunities for the Orke; 'Pless my Soul: To shallow Rivers, to whose Falls melodious Birds sings Madrigalls; There will we make our Peds of Roses, and a thousand fragrant Posies. To shallow — 'Mercy on me, I have a great Disposition to cry. Melodious Birds sing Madrigal — When as I sat in Pabilon; and a thousand vagram Posies. To shallow, &c.

Simp. Yonder he is coming, this way, Sir Hugh.

Eva. He's welcome. To shallow Rivers, to whose Falls — Heav'n prosper the Right: What Weapons is he?

Simp. No Weapons, Sir; there comes my Master, Mr. Shallow, and another Gentleman, from Frogmore, over the Stile, this way.

Eva. Pray you give me my Gown, or else keep it in your Arms.

Enter Page, Shallow, and Slender.

Shal. How now, Master Parlon? Good-morrow, good Sir Hugh. Keep a Gamester from the Dice, and a good Student from his Book, and it is wonderful.

Slen. Ah sweet Anne Page!

Page. Save you, good Sir Hugh.

Eva. 'Pless you from his Mercy sake, all of you.

Shal. What? The Sword and the Word?

Do you study them both, Mr. Parlon?

Page. And youthful still, in your Doublet and Hose, this raw-rumatick Day?

Eva. There is Reasons and Causes for it.

Page. We are come to you, to do a good Office, Mr. Parlon.

Eva. Ferry well: What is it?

Page. Yonder is a most reverend Gentleman, who be-like, having receiv'd Wrong by some Person, is at most odds with his own Gravity and Patience, that ever you saw.

Shal. I have liv'd fourscore Years, and upwards: I never heard a Man of his Place, Gravity and Learning, so wide of his own Respect.

Eva. What is he?

Page. I think you know him, Mr. Doctor Caius, the renowned French Physician.

Eva. Got's Will, and his Passion of my Heart! I had as lief you should tell me of a mess of Porridge.

Page. Why?

Eva. He has no more Knowledge in *Hibocrates* and *Galen*; and he is a Knave besides, a cowardly Knave as you would desire to be acquainted withal.

Page. I warrant you, he's the Man should fight with him.

Slou. O sweet *Anne Page*!

Enter Host, Caius, and Rugby.

Shal. It appears so by his Weapons: Keep them asunder; here comes Doctor *Caius*.

Page. Nay, good Mr. Parson, keep in your Weapon.

Shal. So do you, good Mr. Doctor.

Host. Disarm them, and let them question; let them keep their Limbs whole, and hack our *English*.

Caius. I pray you let me speak a Word with your Ear: Wherefore vill you not meet-a me?

Eva. Pray you use your Patience in good time.

Caius. By gar, you are de Coward, de *Jack Dog*, *John Ape*.

Eva. Pray you let us not be Laughing-stocks to other Mens Humours; I desire you in Friendship, and will one way or other make you amends; I will knog your Urinal about your Knave's Cogs-comb.

Caius. Diable *Jack Rugby*, mine Host de *Farter*, have I not stay for him, to kill him? have I not ar de Place I did appoint?

Eva. As I am a Christian-soul, now look you, this is the Place appointed; I'll be judgment by mine Host of the Garter.

Host. Peace, I say, *Gallia* and *Gaul*, *French* and *Welsh*, Soul-curer, and Body-curer.

Caius. Ay dat is very good, excellent.

Host. Peace, I say; hear mine Host of the Garter. Am I Politick? am I Subtle? am I a *Machiavel*? Shall I lose my Doctor? No; he gives me the Potions and the Motions. Shall I lose my Parson? my Priest? my Sir *Hugh*? No; he gives me the Proverbs and the No-verbs. Give me thy Hand, Celestial, so. Boys of Art, I have deceived you both: I have directed you to wrong

wrong Places; your Hearts are mighty, your Skins are whole, and let burn'd Sack be the Issue. Come, lay their Swords to Pawn. Follow me, Lad of Peace, follow, follow, follow.

Shal. Trust me, a mad Host. Follow, Gentlemen, follow.

Slen. O sweet *Anne Page*! [*Ex. Shal, Slen, Page and Host.*]

Caius. Hal do I perceive dat? Have you make a-de-let of us, ha, ha?

Eva. This is well, he has made us his Vlowing-flog; I desire you that we may be Friends; and let us knog our Prains together, to be revenge on this same scall Scurvy-cogging Companion, the Host of the Garter.

Caius. By gar, with all my Heart; he promise to bring me where is *Anne Page*; by gar, he deceives me too.

Eva. Well, I will smite his Noddles; pray you follow.

SCENE II

Enter Mistress Page and Robin.

Mrs. Page. Nay, keep your way, little Gallant; you were wont to be a Follower, but now you are a Leader. Whether had you rather lead mine Eyes, or eye your Master's Heels?

Rob. I had rather, Forsooth, go before you like a Man, than follow him like a Dwarf.

Mrs. Page. O you are a flattering Boy; now I see you'll be a Courtier.

Enter Ford.

Ford. Well met, Mistress *Page*; whither go you?

Mrs. Page. Truly Sir, to see your Wife; is she at home?

Ford. Ay, and as idle as she may hang together for want of Company; I think if your Husbands were dead, you two would marry.

Mrs. Page. Be sure of that, two other Husbands.

Ford. Where had you this pretty Weather-cock?

Mrs. Page. I cannot tell what the dickens his Name is my Husband had him of: What do you call your Knight's Name, Sirrah?

Rob. Sir *John Falstaff.*

Ford.

Ford. Sir *John Falstaff*?

Mrs. Page. He, he; I can never hit on's Name; there is such a League between my good man and he. Is your Wife at home, indeed?

Ford. Indeed she is.

Mrs. Page. By your leave, Sir; I am sick 'till I see her.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Page and Robin.*]

Ford. Has *Page* any Brains? hath he any Eyes? hath he any thinking? sure they sleep; he hath no use of them. Why, this Boy will carry a Letter twenty Mile, as easie as a Cannon will shoot point-blank twelve-score; he pieces out his Wife's Inclination, he gives her Folly Motion and Advantage, and now she's going to my Wife, and *Falstaff's* Boy with her. A Man may hear this Shower sing in the Wind; and *Falstaff's* Boy with her! Good Plots; they are laid, and our revolted Wives share Damnation together. Well, I will take him, then torture my Wife, pluck the borrowed Vail of Modesty from the so seeming Mistress *Page*, divulge *Page* himself for a secure and wilful *Adon*, and to those violent Proceedings all my Neighbours shall cry aim. The Clock gives me my Cue, and my Assurance bids me search; there I shall find *Falstaff*: I shall be rather praised for this than mocked; for it is as positive as the Earth is firm, that *Falstaff* is there: I will go.

Enter Page, Shallow, Slender, Host, Evans, and Caius.

Shal. Page, &c. Well met, Mr. *Ford*.

Ford. Trust me, a good Knot: I have good Cheer at home, and I pray you all go with me.

Shal. I must excuse my self, Mr. *Ford*.

Slep. And so must I, Sir;

We have appointed to dine with Mistress *Anne*,
And I would not break with her for more Money
Than I'll speak of.

Shal. We have linger'd about a Match between *Anne Page* and my Cousin *Slender*, and this Day we shall have our Answer.

Slen. I hope I have your good Will, Father *Page*.

Page. You have, Mr. *Slender*, I stand wholly for you; but my Wife, Master Doctor, is for you altogether.

Cai. Ay, be gar, and de Maid is love-a-me: My Nursh-a-Quickly tell me so much.

Host.

Host. What say you to young Mr. Fenson? he capers, he dances, he has Eyes of Youth, he writes Verses, he speaks Holy-Day, he smells April and May, he will carry't, he will carry't, 'tis in his Buttons, he will carry't.

Page. Not by my Consent, I promise you: The Gentleman is of no having, he kept Company with the wild Prince, and Poinz; he is of too high a Region, he knows too much; no, he shall not knit a Knot in his Fortunes, with the Finger of my Substance. If he take her, let him take her simply: the Wealth I have waits on my Consent, and my Consent goes not that way.

Ford. I beseech you heartily, some of you go home with me to Dinner; besides your Cheer you shall have Sport; I will shew you a Monster. Mr. Doctor you shall go, so shall your Mr. Page, and you Sir Hugh.

Shal. Well, fare you well:

We shall have the freer Woing at Mr. Page's.

Caius. Go home, John Rugby, I come anon.

Host. Farewell my Hearts; I will to my honest Knight Falstaff, and drink Canary with him.

Ford. I think I shall drink in Pipe-Wine first with him: I'll make him dance. Will you go, Gentles?

All. Have with you to see this Monster. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Enter Mistress Ford, Mistress Page, and Servants with a Basket.

Mrs. Ford. What John! what Robert!

Mrs. Page. Quickly, quickly: Is the Buck-basket—

Mrs. Ford. I warrant. What Robin, I say.

Mrs. Page. Come, come, come.

Mrs. Ford. Here, set it down.

Mrs. Page. Give your Men the Charge, we must be brief.

Mrs. Ford. Marry, as I told you before, John and Robert, be ready here hard by in the Brew-Houle, and when I suddenly call you, come forth, and, without any pause or staggering, take this Basket on your Shoulders; that done, trudge with it in all haste, and carry it among the
Whiffiers

Whitsters in *Datchet-Mead*, and there empty it in the muddy Ditch, close by the *Thames* side.

Mrs. Page. You will do it ? [Direction.

Mrs. Ford. I ha' told them over and over ; they lack no Be gone, and come when you are call'd.

Mrs. Page. He comes little *Robin*.

Enter Robin.

Mrs. Ford. How now, my Eyes-Musket, what News with you ?

Rob. My Master, Sir *John*, is come in at your Back-door, Mistress *Ford*, and requests your Company.

Mrs. Page. You little Jack-a-lent, have you been true to us ?

Rob. Ay, I'll be sworn ; my Master knows not of your being here, and hath threaten'd to put me into everlasting Liberty, if I tell you of it ; for he swears he'll turn me away.

Mrs. Page. Thou'rt a good Boy ; this Secrecy of thine shall be a Tailor to thee, and shall make thee a new Doublet and Hose. I'll go hide me.

Mrs. Ford. Do so ; go tell thy Master I am alone ; Mistress *Page*, remember you your Cue. [Exit *Robin*.

Mrs. Page. I warrant thee ; if do not act it, hiss me.

[Exit *Mrs. Page*.

Mrs. Ford. Go to then ; we'll use this unwholsome Humidity, this gross watry Pumpion, we'll teach him to know Turtles from Jays.

Enter Falstaff.

Fal. Have I caught thee, my heav'nly Jewel ? Why, now let me die ; for I have liv'd long enough : This is the Period of my Ambition : O this blessed Hour !

Mrs. Ford. O sweet Sir *John* !

Fal. Mistress *Ford*, I cannot cog, I cannot prate, Mistress *Ford* : Now shall I sin in my Wish. I would thy Husband were dead, I'll speak it before the best Lord, I would make thee my Lady.

Mrs. Ford. I your Lady, Sir *John* ? Alas, I should be a pitiful Lady.

Fal. Let the Court of *France* shew me such another ; I see how thine Eye would emulate the Diamond : Thou hast the right arched-beauty of the Brow, that becomes the

the Ship-Tire, the Tire-Valiant, or any Tire of *Venetian* Admittance.

Mrs. Ford. A plain Kerehisse, Sir *John* :

My Brows become nothing else, nor that well neither.

Fal. Thou art a Tyrant to say so ; thou wouldst make an absolute Courtier, and the firm fixure of thy Foot would give an excellent Motion to thy Gate, in a semi-circled Farthingale. I see what thou wert, if Fortune thy Foe were not, Nature thy Friend : Come, thou canst not hide it.

Mrs. Ford. Believe me, there's no such thing in me.

Fal. What made me love thee ? Let me persuade thee. There's something extraordinary in thee. Come, I cannot cog, and say, thou art this and that, like a many of these hisping Haw-thorn Buds, that come like Women in Mens Apparel, and smell like *Bucklers-Berry* in simpling-time : I cannot ; but I love thee, none but thee, and thou deservest it.

Mrs. Ford. Do not betray me, Sir ; I fear you love *Mistress Page*.

Fal. Thou might'st as well say, I love to walk by the Counter-Gate, which is as hateful to me as the reek of a Lime-kiln.

Mrs. Ford. Well, Heav'n knows how I love you, and you shall one day find it.

Fal. Keep in that Mind ; I'll deserve it.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I must tell you, so you do ; or else I could not be in that Mind.

Rob. [within.] *Mistress Ford*, *Mistress Ford*, here's *Mistress Page* at the Door, sweating, and blowing, and looking wildly, and would needs speak with you presently.

Fal. She shall not see me ; I will ensconce me behind the Arras.

Mrs. Ford. Pray you do so ; she's a very tattling Woman.

Enter *Mistress Page*.

What's the matter ? How now ?

Mrs. Page. O *Mistress Ford*, what have you done ? You're sham'd, y^eare overthrown, you are undone for ever.

Mrs. Ford. What's the matter, good *Mistress Page* ?

Mrs. Page. O well-a-day, *Mistress Ford*, having an honest Man to your Husband, to give him such cause of Suspicion.

Mrs.

The Merry Wives

Mrs. Ford. What cause of Suspicion ?

Mrs. Page. What cause of Suspicion ? Out upon you ; how am I mistook in you ?

Mrs. Ford. Why, alas ! what's the matter ?

Mrs. Page. Your Husband's coming hither, Woman, with all the Officers in *Windsor*, to search for a Gentleman that he says is now here in the House, by your Consent, to take an ill Advantage of his Absence. You are undone.

Mrs. Ford. 'Tis not so, I hope.

Mrs. Page. Pray Heav'n it be not so, that you have such a Man here ; but 'tis most certain your Husband's coming with half *Windsor* at his Heels, to search for such a one. I come before to tell you, if you know your self clear, why, I am glad of it ; but if you have a Friend here, convey, convey him out. Be not amaz'd, call all your Senses to you, defend your Reputation, or bid farewell to your good Life for ever.

Mrs. Ford. What shall I do ? there is a Gentleman, my dear Friend ; and I fear not mine own Shame so much as his Peril. I had rather than a thousand Pound he were out of the House.

Mrs. Page. For shame, never stand, you had rather, and you had rather ; your Husband's here at hand, bethink you of some Conveyance ; in the House you cannot hide him. Oh, how have you deceiv'd me ? Look, here is a Basket, if he be of any reasonable Stature, he may creep in here, and throw foul Linnen upon him, as if it were going to Bucking : Or it is whiting time, send him by your two Men to *Datchet Mead*.

Mrs. Ford. He's too big to go in there : What shall I do ?

Enter Falstaff.

Fal. Let me see't, let me see't, O let me see't, I'll in, I'll in ; follow your Friend's Counsel ; I'll in.

Mrs. Page. What, Sir *John Falstaff* ? are these your Letters, Knight ?

Fal. I love thee, help me away ; let me creep in here : I'll never —

[*He goes into the Basket, they cover him with foul Linnen.*

Mrs.

Mrs. Page. Help to cover your Master, Boy : Call your Men, Mistress Ford. You dissembling Knight.

Mrs. Ford. What, John, Robert, John, go take up these Cloaths here, quickly. Where's the Cowl-staff? Look how you drumble : Carry them to the Landress in Datchet-Mead ; quickly, come.

Enter Ford, Page, Caius, and Evans.

Ford. Pray you come near ; if I suspect without Cause, Why then make sport at me, then let me be your Jest, I deserve it. How now ? whither bear you this ?

Serv. To the Landress, Forsooth.

Mrs. Ford. Why, what have you to do whither they bear it ? You were best meddle with Buck-washing.

Ford. Buck ? I would I could wash my self of the Buck : Buck, Buck, Buck, ay Buck : I warrant you Buck, and of the Season too, it shall appear.

[Exeunt Servants with the Basket.]

Gentlemen, I have dreamt to Night, I'll tell you my Dream : Here, here, here be my Keys ; ascend my Chambers, search, seek, find out. I'll warrant we'll unkennel the Fox. Let me stop this way first : So, now uncape.

Page. Good Master Ford, be contented : You wrong your self too much.

Ford. True, Master Page. Up Gentlemen, you shall see Sport anon ; follow me, Gentlemen.

Eva. This is ferry fantastical Humours and Jealousies.

Caius. By gar, 'tis no the Fashion ot France ; it is not jealous in France —

Page. Nay, follow him, Gentlemen, see the Issue of his Search. *[Exeunt.]*

Remains Mistress Page and Mistress Ford.

Mrs. Page. Is there not a double Excellency in this ?

Mrs. Ford. I know not which pleases me better, that my Husband is deceiv'd, or Sir John.

Mrs. Page. What a taking was he in when your Husband ask'd who was in the Basket ?

Mrs. Ford. I am half afraid he will have need of washing, so throwing him into the Water will do him a Benefit.

Mrs. Page. Hang him, dishonest Rascal ; I would all of the same Strain were in the same Distress.

Mrs.

Mrs. Ford. I think my Husband hath some special Suspicion of *Falstaff's* being here ! I never saw him so gross in his Jealousie 'till now.

Mrs. Page. I will lay a Plot to try that, and we will yet have more Tricks with *Falstaff* : His dissolute Disease will scarce obey this Medicine.

Mrs. Ford. Shall we send that foolish Carrion, Mistress *Quickly*, to him, and excuse his throwing into the Water, and give him another Hope, to betray him to another Punishment ?

Mrs. Page. We'll do it ; let him be sent for to morrow by eight a Clock, to have amends.

Re-enter Ford, Page, &c.

Ford. I cannot find him ; may be the Knave bragg'd of that he could not compass.

Mrs. Page. Heard you that ?

Mrs. Ford. You use me well Master *Ford*, do you ?

Ford. Ay, ay, I do so.

Mrs. Page. Heav'n make you better than your Thoughts.

Ford. Amen.

Mrs. Page. You do your self mighty Wrong, Mr. *Ford*.

Ford. Ay, ay ; I must bear it.

Eva. If there be any pody in the House, and in the Chambers, and in the Coffers, and in the Presses, Heav'n forgive my Sins.

Cains. By gar, nor I too ; there is no Bodies.

Page. Fie, fie, Mr. *Ford*, are you not asham'd ? What Spirit, what Devil suggests this Imagination ? I would not ha your Distemper in this kind, for the Wealth of *Windsor Castle*.

Ford. 'Tis my Fault, Mr. *Page* : I suffer for it.

Eva. You suffer for a pad Conscience ; your Wife is as honest a o'mans, as I will desires among five thousand, and five hundred too.

Cains. By gar, I see 'tis an honest Woman.

Ford. Well, I promis'd you a Dinner ; come, come, walk in the Park. I pray you pardon me ; I will hereafter make known to you why I have done this. Come Wife, come Mistress *Page*, I pray you pardon me : Pray heartily pardon me.

Page.

Page. Let's go in, Gentlemen; but, trust me, we'll mock him. I do invite you to Morrow-Morning to my House to Breakfast, after we'll a birding together; I have a fine Hawk for the Bush. Shall it be so?

Ford. Any thing.

Eva. If there is one, I shall make two in the Company.

Caius. If there be one or two, I shall make a the third.

Ford. Pray you go, Mr. *Page*.

Eva. I pray you now remembrance to morrow on the lowlie Knave, mine Host.

Caius. Dat is good, by gar, with all my Heart.

Eva. A lowlie Knave, to have his Gibes, and his Mockeries. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

Enter Fenton, and Mistress Anne Page.

Fent. I see I cannot get thy Father's Love;
Therefore no more turn me to him, sweet *Nan*.

Anne. Alas! how then?

Fent. Why, thou must be thy self.
He doth object I am too great of Birth,
And that my State being gall'd with my Expence,
I seek to heal it only by his Wealth.
Besides these, other Bars he lays before me,
My Riots past, my wild Societies:
And tells me, 'tis a thing impossible
I should love thee, but as a Property.

Anne. May be he tells you true.

Fent. No, Heav'n so speed me in my time to come,
Albeit, I will confess, thy Father's Wealth
Was the first Motive that I woo'd thee, *Anne*:
Yet wooing thee, I found thee of more value
Than Stamps in Gold, or Sums in sealed Bags;
And 'tis the very Riches of thy self
That now I aim at.

Anne. Gentle Mr. *Fenton*,
Yet seek my Father's Love, still seek it, Sir:
If Opportunity and humblest Suit
Cannot attain it, why then hark you hither.

Enter

The Merry Wives

Enter Shallow, Slender and Mistress Quickly.

Shal. Break their Talk, Mistress *Quickly*;
My Kinsman shall speak for himself.

Slen. I'll make a Shaft or a Bolt on't: 'D'slid 'tis but venturing.

Shal. Be not dismay'd.

Slen. No, she shall not dismay me:
I care not for that, but I am afraid.

Quic. Hark ye; Mr. *Slender* would speak a word with you.

Anne. I come to him. This is my Father's Choice.
O, what a World of vile ill-favour'd Faults
Look handsome in three hundred Pounds a Year?

Quic. And how does good Master *Fenton*?
Pray you a word with you.

Shal. She's coming; to her, Coz.
O Boy, thou hadst a Father!

Slen. I had a Father, Mrs. *Anne*; my Uncle can tell you
good Jest of him. Pray you, Uncle, tell Mrs. *Anne* the
Jest, how my Father stole two Geese out of a Pen, good
Uncle.

Shal. Mistress *Anne*, my Cousin loves you.

Slen. Ay, that I do, as well as I love any Woman in
Gloucestershire.

Shal. He will maintain you like a Gentlewoman.

Slen. Ay, that I will; come cut and long-tail under
the degree of a Squire.

Shal. He will make you a hundred and fifty Pounds
Jointure.

Anne. Good Master *Shallow*, let him woo for him-
self.

Shal. Marry, I thank you for it; I thank you for that.
Good Comfort; she calls you, Coz: I'll leave you.

Anne. Now Master *Slender*.

Slen. Now good Mistress *Anne*.

Anne. What is your Will?

Slen. My Will? Od's-heart-lings, that's a pretty Jest in-
deed, I ne'er made my Will yet, I thank Heav'n; I am
not such a sickly Creature, I give Heav'n Praise.

Anne. I mean, Mr. *Slender*, what would you with
me?

Slen.

Slender. Truly for my own part, I would little or nothing with you; your Father and my Uncle have made Motions; if it be my Luck, so; if not, happy Man be his dole; they can tell you how things go better than I can; you may ask your Father; here he comes.

Enter Page, and Mistress Page.

Page. Now, Master *Slender*: Love him, Daughter *Anne*. Why how now? What does Master *Fenton* here?

You wrong me, Sir, thus still to haunt my House:

I tell you, Sir, my Daughter is dispos'd of.

Fenton. Nay, Master *Page*, be not impatient.

Mrs. Page. Good Master *Fenton*, come not to my Child.

Page. She is no Match for you.

Fenton. Sir, will you hear me?

Page. No, good Master *Fenton*.

Come, Master *Shallow*; come, Son *Slender*, in.

Knowing my Mind, you wrong me, Master *Fenton*.

[Exeunt Page, Shallow, and Slender.]

Quic. Speak to Mistress *Page*.

Fenton. Good Mistress *Page*, for that I love your Daughter In such a righteous Fashion as I do,

Perforce, against all Checks, Rebukes and Manners,

I must advance the Colours of my Love,

And not retire. Let me have your good Will.

Anne. Good Mother, do not marry me to yon Fool.

Mrs. Page. I mean it not, I seek you a better Husband.

Quic. That's my Master, Master Doctor.

Anne. Alas I had rather be set quick i'th' Earth, And bow'd to Death with Turneps.

Mrs. Page. Come, trouble not your self, good Master I will not be your Friend nor Enemy: *[Fenton,*

My Daughter will I question how she loves you,

And as I find her, so am I affected.

'Till then, farewell Sir; she must needs go in,

Her Father will be angry. *[Ex. Mrs. Page and Anne.]*

Fenton. Farewel; gentle Mistress; farewell *Nan*.

Quic. This is my doing now. Nay, said I, will you cast away your Child on a Fool, and a Physician?

Look on Master *Fenton*: This is my doing.

Fenton. I thank thee; and I pray thee once to Night, Give my sweet *Nan* this Ring. There's for thy Pains.

[Exit.]
Quic.

Quic. Now Heav'n send thee good Fortune. A kind Heart he hath, a Woman would run through Fire and Water for such a kind Heart. But yet, I would my Master had Mistress *Anne*, or I would Mr. *Slender* had her; or, in sooth, I would Mr. *Fenton* had her. I will do what I can for them all three, for so I have promis'd, and I'll be as good as my Word, but speciously for Mr. *Fenton*. Well, I must of another Errand to Sir *John Falstaff* from my two Mistresses; what a Beast am I to slack it? [Exit.]

SCENE III.

Enter Falstaff and Bardolph.

Fal. *Bardolph*, I say.

Bard. Here, Sir.

Fal. Go fetch me a Quart of Sack, put a Toast in't. Have I liv'd to be carry'd in a Basket, like a Barrow of Butchers Offal, and to be thrown into the *Thames*? Well, if I be serv'd such another trick, I'll have my Brains ta'en out and butter'd, and give them to a Dog for a New-years Gift. The Rogues slighted me into the River, with as little Remorse as they would have drown'd a blind Bitches Puppies, fifteen i'th' litter; and you may know, by my Size, that I have a kind of alacrity in sinking: If the Bottom were as deep as Hell, I should down. I had been drown'd, but that the Shore was shelvy and shallow; a Death that I abhor; for the Water swells a Man: And what a thing should I have been when I had been swell'd? I should have been a Mountain of Mummy.

Bard. Here's Mrs. *Quickly*, Sir, to speak with you.

Fal. Come, let me pour in some Sack to the *Thames*-Water; for my Belly's as cold as if I had swallow'd Snow-balls, for Pills to cool the Reins. Call her in.

Bard. Come in, Woman.

Enter Mistress Quickly.

Quic. By your Leave: I cry you Mercy. Give your Worship Good-morrow.

Fal. Take away these Challices: Go, brew me a Pottle of Sack finely.

Bard. With Eggs, Sir?

Fal. Simple of it self: I'll no Pullet-Sperm in my Brew-age. How now?

Quic.

Quic. Marry, Sir, I come to your Worship from Mistress Ford.

Fal. Mistress Ford? I have had Ford enough; I was thrown into the Ford; I have my Belly full of Ford.

Quic. Alas the Day! good Heart, that was not her Fault: She does so take on with her Men; they mistook their Erektion.

Fal. So did I mine, to build on a foolish Woman's Promise.

Quic. Well, she laments, Sir, for it, that it would yern your Heart to see it. Her Husband goes this Morning a birding; she desires you once more to come to her, between eight and nine. I must carry her Word quickly, she'll make you amends, I warrant you.

Fal. Well, I will visit her; tell her so, and bid her think what a Man is: Let her consider his Frailty, and then judge of my Merit.

Quic. I will tell her.

Fal. Do so. Between nine and ten, say'st thou?

Quic. Eight and nine, Sir.

Fal. Well, be gone; I will not miss her.

Quic. Peace be with you, Sir.

[Exit.

Fal. I marvel I hear not of Master Broom; he sent me Word to stay within: I like his Money well. Oh, here he comes.

Enter Ford.

Ford. Bless you, Sir.

Fal. Now, Master Broom, you come to know what hath pass'd between me and Ford's Wife.

Ford. That indeed, Sir John, is my business.

Fal. Master Broom, I will not lie to you; I was at her House the Hour she appointed me.

Ford. And you sped, Sir?

Fal. Very ill-favour'dly, Master Broom.

Ford. How Sir, did she change her Determination?

Fal. No, Master Broom; but the peaking Cornuto her Husband, Master Broom, dwelling in a continual larum of Jealousie, comes in the instant of our Encounter, after we had embrac'd, kiss'd, protested, and as it were spoke the Prologue of our Comedy; and at his Heels a rabble of his Companions, thither provok'd and instigated by his Distemper,

Distemper, and forsooth, to search his House for his Wife's Love.

Ford. What, while you were there?

Fal. While I was there.

Ford. And did he search for you, and could not find you?

Fal. You shall hear. As good Luck would have it, comes in one Mistress Page, gives Intelligence of *Ford's* Approach, and in her Invention, and *Ford's* Wife's Distraction, they convey'd me into a Buck-basket.

Ford. A Buck-basket?

Fal. Yea, a Buck-basket; ramm'd me in with foul Shirts and Smocks, Socks, foul Stockings, and greasie Napkins, that, Master *Broom*, there was the rankest Compound of villainous Smell that ever offended Nostril.

Ford. And how long lay you there?

Fal. Nay, you shall here, Master *Broom*, what I have suffer'd, to bring this Woman to evil, for your good. Being thus cram'd in the Basket, a couple of *Ford's* Knaves, his Hinds, were call'd forth by their Mistress, to carry me in the name of foul Cloaths to *Datchet-lane*; they took me on their Shoulders, met the jealous Knave their Master in the Door, who ask'd them once or twice what they had in their Basket; I quak'd for Fear, lest the Lunatick Knave would have search'd it; but Fate, ordaining he should be a Cuckold, held his Hand. Well, on went he for a search, and away went I for foul Cloaths; but mark the sequel, Master *Broom*, I suffered the pangs of three several Deaths: First, an intolerable Fright, to be detected by a jealous rotten Bell-weather; next to be compass'd like a good Bilbo, in the circumference of a Peck, hilt to point, heel to head; and then to be stopt in, like a strong Distillation, with stinking Cloaths, that fretted in their own Grease: Think of that, a Man of my Kidney; think of that, that am as subject to heat as Butter; a Man of continual dissolution and thaw; it was a Miracle to 'scape Suffocation. And in the height of this Bath, when I was more than half stew'd in Grease, like a *Dutch* Dish, to be thrown into the *Thames*, and cool'd, glowing hot, in that serge, like a Horse-shoe; think of that; hissing hot, think of that, Master *Broom*.

Ford.

Ford. In good sadness, Sir, I am sorry that for my sake you suffer'd all this. My Suit is then desperate; you'll undertake her no more?

Fal. Master Broom, I will be thrown into *Etna*, as I have been into *Thames*, ere I will leave her thus. Her Husband is this Morning gone a Birding; I have receiv'd from her another Ambassie of meeting; 'twixt eight and nine is the Hour, Master Broom.

Ford. 'Tis past eight already, Sir.

Fal. Is it? I will then address me to my Appointment: Come to me at your convenient leisure, and you shall know how I speed; and the Conclusion shall be crown'd with your enjoying her; Adieu, you shall have her, Master Broom, Master Broom, you shall cuckold *Ford*. [*Exit.*]

Ford. Hum! Ha! Is this a Vision? Is this a Dream? Do I sleep? Master *Ford* awake, awake Master *Ford*; there's a Hole made in your best Coat, Master *Ford*; This 'tis to be married! this 'tis to have Linnen and Buck-baskets! Well, I will proclaim my self what I am; I will now take the Leacher; he is at my House; he cannot 'scape me; 'tis impossible he should; he cannot creep into a Half-penny Purse, nor into a Pepper-box. But least the Devil that guides him should aid him, I will search impossible places; tho' what I am I cannot avoid, yet to be what I would not shall not make me tame: If I have Horns, to make one mad, let the Proverb go with me, I'll be horn-mad. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Mistress Page, Mistress Quickly and William.

Mrs. Page. IS he at Mr. *Ford's* already, think'st thou?

Quic. Sure he is by this, or will be presently; but truly he is very courageous mad, about his throwing into the Water; Mrs. *Ford* desires you to come suddenly.

Mrs. Page. I'll be with her by and by; I'll but bring my young Man here to School. Look where his Master comes; 'tis a Playing-day I see. How now, Sir *Hugh*, no School to Day?

Enter Evans.

Eva. No; Master *Slender* is let the Boys leave to play.

Quic. Blessing of his Heart.

Mrs. Page. Sir *Hugh*, my Husband says my Son profits nothing in the World at his Book; I pray you ask him some Questions in his Accidence.

Eva. Come hither, *William*; hold up your Head, come.

Mrs. Page. Come on Sirrah, hold up your Head; answer your Master, be not afraid.

Eva. William, how many Numbers is in Nouns?

Will. Two.

Quic. Truly, I thought there had been one Number more, because they say, od's Nowns.

Eva. Peace, your tatlings. What is, *Fair, William*?

Will. *Pulcher.*

Quic. Poulcats? There are fairer things than Poulcats, sure.

Eva. You are a very simplicity o'man; I pray you peace. What is *Lapis, William*?

Will. A Stone.

Eva. And what is a Stone, *William*?

Will. A Pebble.

Eva. No, it is *Lapis*: I pray you remember in your Prain.

Will. *Lapis.*

Eva. That is a good *William*: What is he, *William*, that does lend Articles?

Will. Articles are borrow'd of the Pronoun, and be thus declin'd, *Singulariter Nominativo, hic, hac, hoc.*

Eva. *Nominativo, hig, hag, hog*; pray you mark: *Genitivo, hujus*: Well, what is your *Accusative Case*?

Will. *Accusative, hinc.*

Eva. I pray you have your remembrance, Child, *Accusativo, hing, bang, hog.*

Quic. Hang hog is Latin for Bacon, I warrant you.

Eva.

Eva. Leave you Prabbles, o'man. What is the *Focative Case, William?*

Will. O, *Vocativo*, O.

Eva. Remember *William, Focative*, is caret.

Quic. And that's a good Root.

Eva. O'man, forbear.

Mrs. Page. Peace.

Eva. What is your *Genitive Case Plural, William?*

Will. *Genitive Case?*

Eva. Ay.

Will. *Genitive, horum, harum, horum.*

Quic. 'Vengeance of *Ginyes Case*; fie on her; never name her, Child, if she be a Whore.

Eva. For shame, o'man.

Quic. You do ill to teach the Child such Words: He teaches him to hic, and to hac, which they'll do fast enough of themselves; and to call horum; fie upon you.

Eva. O'man, art thou Lunacies? Hast thou no understandings for thy Cases, and the Numbers of the Genders? Thou art as foolish Christian Creatures as I would desires.

Mrs. Page. Pr'ythee hold thy Peace.

Eva. Shew me now, *William*, some Declensions of your Pronouns.

Will. Forsooth, I have forgot.

Eva. It is *Qui, que, quod*; if you forget your *Quies*; your *Ques*, and your *Quods*, you must be preeches: Go your ways and play, go.

Mrs. Page. He is a better Scholar than I thought he was.

Eva. He is a good sprag Memory. Farewel, *Mrs. Page*.

Mrs. Page. Adieu, good Sir *Hugh*.

Get you home, Boy. Come we stay too long. [Exeunt]

SCENE II.

Enter Falstaff and Mistress Ford.

Fal. Mistress *Ford*, your Sorrow hath eaten up my Sufferance; I see you are obsequious in your Love, and I profess Requital to a hairs breath, not only, Mistress

Ford, in the simple Office of Love, but in all the Accountment, Complement, and Ceremony of it. But are you sure of your Husband now?

Mrs. Ford. He's a Birding, sweet Sir *John*.

Mrs. Page [*within*]. What ho, Gossip *Ford*! what ho!

Mrs. Ford. Step into th' Chamber, Sir *John*. [*Ex. Falstaff*.]

Enter Mrs. Page.

Mrs. Page. How now, sweet Heart, who's at home besides your self?

Mrs. Ford. Why none but mine own People.

Mrs. Page. Indeed?

Mrs. Ford. No certainly.——Speak louder.

Mrs. Page. Truly, I am so glad you have no body here.

Mrs. Ford. Why?

Mrs. Page. Why Woman, your Husband is in his old Lines again; he so takes on yonder with my Husband, so rails against all married Mankind, so curses all *Eve's* Daughters, of what Complexion soever, and so buffets himself on the Fore-head, crying peer-out, peer-out, that any Madness I ever yet beheld seem'd but Tameness, Civility and Patience to this Distemper he is in now; I am glad the fat Knight is not here.

Mrs. Ford. Why, does he talk of him?

Mrs. Page. Of none but him, and swears he was carry'd out, the last time he search'd for him, in a Basket; protests to my Husband he is now here, and hath drawn him and the rest of their Company from their Sport, to make another Experiment of his Suspicion; but I am glad the Knight is not here; now he shall see his own Foolery.

Mrs. Ford. How near is he, Mistress *Page*?

Mrs. Page. Hard by, at Streets end, he will be here anon.

Mrs. Ford. I am undone, the Knight is here.

Mrs. Page. Why then thou art utterly sham'd, and he's but a dead Man. What a Woman are you? away with him, away with him; better Shame than Murther.

Mrs. Ford. Which way should he go? How should I bestow him? Shall I put him into the Basket again?

Enter Falstaff.

Fal. No, I'll come no more i'th' Basket:
May I not go out ere he come?

Mrs.

Mrs. Page. Alas, Alas, three of Master *Ford's* Brothers watch the Door with Pistols, that none should issue out, otherwise you might slip ere he came: But what make you here?

Fal. What shall I do? I'll creep up into the Chimney.

Mrs. Ford. There they always use to discharge their Birding-Pieces; creep into the Kill-Hole.

Fal. Where is it?

Mrs. Ford. He will seek there, on my Word: Neither Press, Coffer, Chest, Trunk, Well, Vault, but he hath an Abstract for the remembrance of such Places, and goes to them by his Note; there is no hiding you in the House.

Fal. I'll go out then.

Mrs. Ford. If you go out in your own Semblance, you die, Sir *John*, unless you go out disguis'd. How might we disguise him?

Mrs. Page. Alas-the-Day, I know not; there is no Woman's Gown big enough for him, otherwise he might put on a Hat, a Muffler, and a Kerchief, and so escape.

Fal. Good Heart, devise something; any Extremity, rather than Mischief.

Mrs. Ford. My Maid's Aunt, the fat Woman of *Brainford*, has a Gown above.

Mrs. Page. On my Word it will serve him, she's as big as he is, and there's her thrumb Hat, and her Muffler too. Run up, Sir *John*.

Mrs. Ford. Go, go, sweet Sir *John*, *Mrs. Page* and I will look some Linnen for your Head.

Mrs. Page. Quick, quick, we'll come dress you straight; put on the Gown the while. [Exit *Falstaff*.]

Mrs. Ford. I would my Husband would meet him in this Shape, he cannot abide the old Woman of *Brainford*; he swears she's a Witch, forbad her my House, and hath threatned to beat her.

Mrs. Page. Heav'n guide him to thy Husband's Cudgel, and the Devil guide his Cudgel afterwards.

Mrs. Ford. But is my Husband coming?

Mrs. Page. Ay in good Sadness is he, and talks of the Basket too, howsoever he hath had Intelligence.

Mrs. Ford. We'll try that; for I'll appoint my Men to carry the Basket again, to meet him at the Door with it, as they did last time.

Mrs. Page. Nay, but he'll be here presently; let's go dress him like the Witch of *Brainford*.

Mrs. Ford. I'll first direct my Men, what they shall do with the Basket; go up, I'll bring Linnen for him straight.

Mrs. Page. Hang him, dishonest Varlet, We cannot misuse him enough.

We'll leave a Proof, by that which we will do,

Wives may be merry, and yet honest too.

We do not act, that often jest and laugh:

'Tis old but true, Still Swine eat all the Draugh.

Mrs. Ford. Go Sirs, take the Basket again on your Shoulders; your Master is hard at door; if he bid you set it down, obey him: Quickly, dispatch.

Enter Servants with the Basket.

1 *Serv.* Come, come, take up.

2 *Serv.* Pray Heav'n it be not full of the Knight again.

1 *Serv.* I hope not. I had as lief bear so much Lead.

Enter Ford, Shallow, Page, Caius and Evans.

Ford. Ay, but if it prove true, Master *Page*, have you any way then to unfool me again? Set down the Basket, Villain; somebody call my Wife, Youth in a Basket! Oh you panderly Rascals, there's a Knot, a Gang, a Pack, a Conspiracy against me; now shall the Devil be sham'd. What Wife, I say; come, come forth, behold what honest Cloaths you send forth to bleaching.

Page. Why, this passes Master *Ford*; you are not to go loose any longer, you must be pinnion'd.

Eva. Why, this is Lunaticks; this is mad as a mad Dog.

Shal. Indeed, Master *Ford*, this is not well indeed.

Ford. So say I too, Sir. Come hither Mistress *Ford*, Mistress *Ford*, the honest Woman, the modest Wife, the virtuous Creature, that hath the jealous Fool to her Husband: I suspect without Cause, Mistress, do I?

Mrs. Ford. Heav'n be my Witness you do, if you suspect me in any Dishonesty.

Ford. Well said, Brazen-face, hold it out: Come forth, Sirrah.

[*Pulls the Cloaths out of the Basket.*

Page. This passes.

Mrs.

Mrs. Ford. Are you not ashamed? let the Cloaths alone.

Ford. I shall find you anon.

Eva. 'Tis unreasonable; will you take up your Wife's Cloaths? Come away.

Ford. Empty the Basket, I say.

Mrs. Ford. Why Man, why?

Ford. Master Page, as I am a Man, there was one convey'd out of my House Yesterday in this Basket; why may not he be there again? In my House I am sure he is; my Intelligence is true, my Jealousie is reasonable; pluck me out all the Linnen.

Mrs. Ford. If you find a Man there, he shall die a Flea's death.

Page. Here's no Man.

Shal. By my Fidelity this is not well, Master Ford; this wrongs you.

Eva. Master Ford, you must pray, and not follow the Imaginations of your own Heart; this is Jealousies.

Ford. Well, he's not here I seek for.

Page. No, nor no where else but in your Brain.

Ford. Help to search my House this one time; if I find not what I seek, shew no colour for my Extremity; let me for ever be your Table-sport; let them say of me, As jealous as Ford, that searched a hollow Wall-nut for his Wives Lemman. Satisfie me once more, once more search with me.

Mrs. Ford. What ho, Mistress Page! come you and the old Woman down; my Husband will come into the Chamber.

Ford. Old Woman! What old Woman's that?

Mrs. Ford. Why, it is my Maid's Aunt of Brainford.

Ford. A Witch, a Quean, and old cozening Quean; have I not forbid her my House? She comes of Errands, does she? We are simple Men, we do not know what's brought to pass under the Profession of Fortune-telling. She works by Charms, by Spells, by the Figure, and such dawbry as this is, beyond our Element; we know nothing. Come down, you Witch, you Hag you, come down, I say.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, good sweet Husband; good Gentlemen, let him not strike the old Woman.

*The Merry Wives**Enter Falstaff in Womans Cloaths.*

Mrs. Page. Come Mother *Prat*, come, give me your Hand.

Ford. I'll *Prat* her. Out of my Door you Witch, [*Beats him.*] you Hag, you Baggage, you Poulcat, you Runnion, out, out, out; I'll conjure you, I'll Fortune-tell you.

[Exit Fal.]

Mrs. Page. Are you not a sham'd?
I think you have kill'd the poor Woman.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, he will do it; 'tis a goodly Credit for you.

Ford. Hang her, Witch.

Eva. By yea, and no, I think the o'man is a Witch indeed: I like not when a o'man has a great Peard; I spy a great Peard under her Muffler.

Ford. Will you follow, Gentlemen? I beseech you follow; see but the Issue of my Jealousie; if I cry out thus upon no Trial, never trust me when I open again.

Page. Let's obey his Humour a little further:

Come, Gentlemen.

[Exeunt.]

Mrs. Page. Trust me, he beat him most pitifully.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, by th' Mass that he did not; he beat him most unpitifully, methought.

Mrs. Page. I'll have the Cudgel hallow'd, and hung o'er the Altar; it hath done meritorious Service.

Mrs. Ford. What think you? May we, with the warrant of Woman-hood, and the Witness of a good Conscience, pursue him with any further Revenge?

Mrs. Page. The Spirit of Wantonness is sure scar'd out of him; if the Devil have him not in Fee-simple, with Fine and Recovery, he will never, I think, in the way of waste, attempt us again.

Mrs. Ford. Shall we tell our Husbands how we have served him?

Mrs. Page. Yes, by all means; if it be but to scrape the Figures out of your Husband's Brain. If they can find in their Hearts the poor unvirtuous fat Knight shall be any further afflicted, we two will still be the Ministers.

Mrs. Ford. I'll warrant they'll have him publicly sham'd; and methinks there would be no period to the Jest, should he not be publicly sham'd.

Mrs.

Mrs. Page. Come to the Forge with it, then shape it:
I would not have things cool. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.

Enter Host and Bardolph.

Bard. Sir, the German desires to have three of your
Horses; the Duke himself will be to Morrow at Court,
and they are going to meet him.

Host. What Duke should that be comes so secretly? I
hear not of him in the Court: Let me speak with the
Gentlemen; they speak English?

Bar. Sir, I'll call them to you.

Host. They shall have my Horses, but I'll make them
pay, I'll swace them. They have had my House a Week
at Command; I have turn'd away my other Guests; they
must come off; I'll swace them, come. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

Enter Page, Ford, Mistress Page, Mistress Ford,
and Evans.

Eva. 'Tis one of the best Discretions of a o'man as ever
I did look upon.

Page. And did he send you both these Letters at an in-
stant?

Mrs. Page. Within a quarter of an Hour.

Ford. Pardon me, Wife. Henceforth do what thou wilt;
I rather will suspect the Sun with Cold,
Than thee with Wantonness; now doth thy Honour stand,
In him that was of late an Heretick,
As firm of Faith.

Page. 'Tis well, 'tis well; no more.
Be not extream in Submission, as in Offence,
But let our Plot go forward: Let our Wives
Yet once again, to make us publick Sport,
Appoint a Meeting with this old fat Fellow,
Where we may take him, and disgrace him for it.

Ford. There is no better way than that they spoke of.

Page. How? to send him Word they'll meet him in the
Park at Midnight? Fie, fie, he'll never come.

Eva. You say he hath been thrown into the River; and has been grievously peaten, as an old o'man; methinks there should be Terrors in him, that he should not come; methinks his Flesh is punish'd, he shall have no Desires.

Page. So think I too.

Mrs. Ford. Devise but how you'll use him when he comes; And let us two devise to bring him thither.

Mrs. Page. There is an old Tale goes, that *Herne* the Hunter, sometime a Keeper in *Windfor* Forest, Doth all the Winter time at still of Midnight Walk round about an Oak, with great ragged Horns, And there he blasts the Tree, and takes the Cattle, And makes Milch-kine yield Blood, and shakes a Chain In a most hideous and dreadful manner. You have heard of such a Spirit, and well you know The superstitious idle-headed *Eld* Receiv'd, and did deliver to our Age This Tale of *Herne* the Hunter for a Truth.

Page. Why yet there want not many that do fear In deep of Night to walk by this *Herne's* Oak; But what of this?

Mrs. Ford. Marry this is our Device, That *Falstaff* at that Oak shall meet with us.

Page. Well, let it not be doubted but he'll come, And in this Shape when you have brought him thither, What shall be done with him? What is your Plot?

Mrs. Page. That likewise we have thought upon, and thus: *Nan Page*, (my Daughter) and my little Son, And three or four more of their Growth, we'll dress Like Urchins, Ouphes, and Fairies, green and white, With Rounds of waxen Tapers on their Heads, And Rattles in their Hands; upon a sudden, As *Falstaff*, she, and I, are newly met, Let them from forth a Saw-pit rush at once With some diffused Song: Upon their sight We two, in great Amazedness, will fly; Then let them all encircle him about, And Fairy-like to pinch the unclean Knight; And ask him why, that Hour of Fairy Revel, In their so sacred Paths he dares to tread In Shape prophane.

Mrs.

Mrs. Ford. And 'till he tell the Truth,
Let the supposed Fairies pinch him sound,
And burn him with their Tapers.

Mrs. Page. The Truth being known,
We'll all present our selves; dis-horn the Spirit,
And mock him home to *Windsor*.

Ford. The Children must
Be practis'd well to this, or they'll ne'er do't.

Eva. I will teach the Children their Behaviours; and I
will be like a Jack-a-napes also, to burn the Knight with
my Taber.

Ford. This will be excellent.
I'll go buy them Vizards.

Mrs. Page. My Nan shall be the Queen of all the Fairies;
Finely attired in a Robe of white.

Page. That Silk would I go buy, and in that time
Shall Mr. Slender steal my Nan away,
And marry her at *Eaton*. Go, send to *Falstaff* straight.

Ford. Nay, I'll to him again in the name of *Broom*;
He'll tell me all his Purpose. Sure he'll come.

Mrs. Page. Fear not you that; go get us Properties
And Tricking for your Fairies.

Eva. Let us about it,
It is admirable Pleasures, and ferry honest Knaverics.

[*Exeunt Page, Ford and Evans.*]

Mrs. Page. Go, Mrs. Ford,
Send quickly to Sir *John*, to know his Mind.

[*Exit Mrs. Ford.*]

I'll to the Doctor, he hath my good Will,
And none but he to marry with *Nan Page*.
That *Slender*, tho' well landed, is an Ideot;
And he my Husband best of all affects:
The Doctor is well mony'd, and his Friends
Potent at Court; he, he, none but he shall have her,
Tho' twenty thousand worthier came to crave her.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE V.

Enter Host and Simple.

Host. What wouldst thou have, Boor? what, Thick-skin? speak, breathe, discuss; brief, short, quick, snap.

Simp. Marry, Sir, I come to speak with Sir *John Falstaff*, from Mr. *Slender*.

Host. There's his Chamber, his House, his Castle, his Standing-bed and Truckle-bed; 'tis painted about with the Story of the Prodigal, fresh and new; go, knock and call; he'll speak like an Anthropophaginian unto thee: Knock, I say.

Simp. There's an old Woman, a fat Woman gone up into his Chamber; I'll be so bold as stay, Sir, 'till she come down; I come to speak with her indeed.

Host. Ha! a fat Woman? The Knight may be robb'd: I'll call. Bully-Knight! Bully-Sir *John*! speak from thy Lungs Military: Art thou there? It is thine *Host*, thine *Ephesian* calls.

Enter Falstaff.

Fal. How now, mine *Host*?

Host. Here's a Bohemian-Tartar carries the coming down of thy fat Woman: Let her descend, Bully, let her descend; my Chambers are honourable, Fie, Privacy? Fie.

Fal. There was, mine *Host*, an old fat Woman even now with me, but she's gone.

Simp. Pray you, Sir, was't not the wise Woman of *Brainford*?

Fal. Ay marry was it, Muscle-shell, what would you with her?

Simp. My Master, Sir, my Master *Slender* sent to her, seeing her go thro' the Street, to know, Sir, whether one *Nym*, Sir, that beguil'd him of a Chain, had the Chain, or no.

Fal. I spake with the old Woman about it.

Simp. And what says she, I pray Sir?

Fal. Marry she says, that the very same Man that beguil'd Master *Slender* of his Chain, cozen'd him of it.

Simp.

Simp. I would I could have spoken with the Woman, her self, I had other things to have spoken with her too, from him.

Fal. What are they? Let us know.

Host. Ay, come; quick.

Simp. I may not conceal them, Sir.

Host. Conceal them, or thou dy'st.

Simp. Why, Sir, they were nothing but about *Mistress Anne Page*; to know if it were my Master's Fortune to have her or no.

Fal. 'Tis, 'tis his Fortune.

Simp. What, Sir?

Fal. To have her, or no: Go; say the Woman told me so.

Simp. May I be so bold to say so, Sir?

Host. Ay, Sir; like who more bold.

Simp. I thank you Worship: I shall make my Master glad with these Tidings. [Exit Simple.]

Host. Thou art clarkly; thou art clarkly, Sir *John*: Was there a wise Woman with thee?

Fal. Ay, that there was, mine *Host*, one that hath taught me more Wit than ever I learn'd before in my Life; and I paid nothing for it neither, but was paid for my learning.

Enter *Bardolph*.

Bard. Out alas, Sir, Cozenage; meer Cozenage!

Host. Where be my Horses? Speak well of them, Varletto.

Bard. Run away with the Cozeners; for so soon as I came beyond *Eaton*, they threw me off from behind one of them in a Slough of Mire, and set Spurs, and away; like three *German Devils*, three Doctor *Faustuses*.

Host. They are gone but to meet the Duke, Villain, do not say they be fled; *Germans* are honest Men.

Enter *Evans*.

Eva. Where is mine *Host*?

Host. What is the Matter, Sir?

Eva. Have a care of your Entertainments; there is a Friend o' mine come to Town, tells me there is three Cozen-Jermans that has cozen'd all the *Hoffs* of *Reading*, of *Maiden-Head*, of *Cole-Brook*, of *Horses* and *Money*. I tell

tell you for good Will, look you; you are wise, and full of Gibes and vouting-Stocks, and 'tis not convenient you should be cozened; fare you well. [Exit.]

Enter Caius.

Caius. Ver'is mine Host de Farteev?

Host. Here, Master Doctor, in Perplexity and doubtful Delemma.

Caius. I cannot tell vat is dat; but it is tell-a-me, dat you make a grand Preparation for a Duke de Jamany; by my trot, der is no Duke dat the Court is know, to come: I tell you for good Will; adieu. [Exit.]

Host. Hue and Cry, Villain, go; assist me, Knight, I am undone; fly, run, Hue and Cry. Villain, I am undone. [Exit.]

Fal. I would all the World might be cozen'd, for I have been cozened and beaten too. If it should come to the Ear of the Court, how I have been transformed, and how my Transformation hath been wash'd and cudgell'd, they would melt me out of my Fat, Drop by Drop, and liquor Fishermens Boats with me; I warrant they would whip me with their fine Wits, 'till I were as crest-faln as a dry'd Pear. I never prosper'd since I forswore my self at *Primero*. Well, if my Wind were but long enough, I would repent. Now, whence come you?

Enter Mistress Quickly.

Quic. From the two Parties, Forsooth.

Fal. The Devil take one Party, and his Dam the other, and so they shall be both bestow'd; I have suffer'd more for their Sakes, more than the villainous Inconstancy of Man's Disposition is able to bear.

Quic. And have not they suffer'd? yes, I warrant, speciouly one of them; Mistress Ford, good Heart, is beaten black and blue, that you cannot see a white Spot about her.

Fal. What tell'st thou me of black and blue? I was beaten my self into all the Colours of the Rain-bow; and I was like to be apprehended for the Witch of Brainford, but that my admirable Dexterity of Wit, counterfeiting the Action of an old Woman, deliver'd me, the Knave Constable had set me i'th' Stocks, i'th' common Stocks for a Witch.

Quic!

Quic. Sir, let me speak with you in your Chamber, you shall hear how things go, and, I warrant, to your Content. Here is a Letter will say somewhat. Good Hearts, what ado is here to bring you together? Sure one of you does not serve Heav'n well, that you are so cross'd.

Fal. Come up into my Chamber. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

Enter Renton and Host.

Host. Master *Fenton*, talk not to me, my Mind is heavy, I will give over all.

Fent. Yet hear me speak; assist me in my Purpose, And, as I am a Gentleman, I'll give thee A hundred Pound in Gold more than your Loss.

Host. I will hear you, Master *Fenton*; and I will, at the least, keep your Counsel.

Fent. From time to time I have acquainted you With the dear Love I bear to fair *Anne Page*, Who, mutually, hath answer'd my Affection, (So far forth as her self might be her Chuser) Ev'n to my Wish; I have a Letter from her Of such Contents, as you will wonder at; The Mirth whereof's so larded with my Matter, That neither singly can be manifested, Without the shew of both. Fat Sir *John Falstaff* Hath a great Scene; the Image of the Jest I'll shew you here at large. Hark good mine Host; To Night at *Herve's* Oak, just 'twixt twelve and one, Must my sweet *Nan* present the Fairy Queen, The Purpose why, is here; in which Disguise, While other Jests are someting rank on Foot, Her Father hath commanded her to slip Away with *Slender*, and with him at *Easton* Immediately to marry; she hath consented. Now Sir, Her Mother, even strong against the Match, And firm for Doctor *Caius*, hath appointed That he shall likewise shuffle her away, While other Sports are tasking of their Minds, And at the Deanry, where a Priest attends, Straight marry her; to this her Mother's Plot

She;

She, seemingly obedient, likewise hath
 Made promise to the Doctor : Now thus it rests ;
 Her Father means she shall be all in White,
 And in that Habit, when *Slender* sees his time
 To take her by the Hand, and bid her go,
 She shall go with him. Her Mother hath intended,
 The better to devote her to the Doctor,
 (For they must all be mask'd and vizarded)
 That, quaint in Green, she shall be loose enrob'd,
 With Ribbands-Pendant, flaring 'bout her Head ;
 And when the Doctor spies his Vantage ripe,
 To pinch her by the Hand, and on that Token,
 The Maid hath given Consent to go with him.

Hof. Which means she to deceive ? Father or Mother ?

Fent. Both, my good *Hof.*, to go along with me ;
 And here it rests, that you'll procure the Vicar
 To stay for me at Church, 'twixt twelve and one,
 And in the lawful Name of marrying,
 To give our Hearts united Ceremony.

Hof. Well, husband your Device ; I'll to the Vicar.
 Bring you the Maid, you shall not lack a Priest.

Fent. So shall I evermore be bound to thee ;
 Beside, I'll make a present Recompence.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter Falstaff and Mistress Quickly.

Fal. **P**R'ythee no more prating ; go, I'll hold. This is the
 third time ; I hope good Luck lyes in odd Numbers ;
 away, go ; they say there is Divinity in odd Numbers,
 either in Nativity, Chance or Death ; away.

Quic. I'll provide you a Chain, and I'll do what I can
 to get you a Pair of Horns. [Exit *Mrs Quickly.*]

Fal. Away, I say, time wears : hold up your Head, and
 mince.

Enter Ford.

How now, Master Broom ? Master Broom, the Matter will
 be known to Night, or never. Be you in the Park about
 Mid-Night, at *Herne's Oak*, and you shall see Wonders.

Ford. Went you not to her Yesterday, Sir, as you told
 me you had appointed ?

Fal.

Fal. I went to her, Master Broom, as you see, like a poor old Man; but I came from her, Master Broom, like a poor old Woman. That same Knave, *Ford* her Husband, hath the finest mad Devil of Jealousie in him, Master Broom, that ever govern'd Frenzy. I will tell you, he beat me grievously, in the shape of a Woman; for in the shape of a Man, Master Broom, I fear not *Goliath* with a Weaver's Beam; because I know also Life is a Shuttle; I am in haste; go along with me, I'll tell you all, Master Broom. Since I pluckt Geese, play'd Truant, and whipt Top, I knew not what 'twas to be beaten, 'till lately. Follow me, I'll tell you strange things of this Knave *Ford*, on whom to Night I will be reveng'd, and I will deliver his Wife into your Hand. Follow; strange things in hand, Master Broom; follow. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

Enter Page, Shallow and Slender.

Page. Come, come; we'll couch i'th' Castle-ditch, 'till we see the light of our Fairies. Remember, Son *Slender*, my Daughter.

Slen. Ay Forsooth, I have spoke with her, and we have a Nay-word how to know one another. I come to her in white and cry Mum, she cries Budget, and by that we know one another.

Shal. That's good too; but what needs either your Mum, or her Budget? The white will decipher her well enough. It hath struck ten a Clock.

Page. The Night is dark, Light and Spirits will become it well; Heav'n prosper our Sport. No Man means evil but the Devil, and we shall know him by his Horns. Let's away; follow me. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.

Enter Mistress Page, Mistress Ford and Caius.

Mrs. Page. Mr. Doctor, my Daughter is in green; when you see your time, take her by the Hand; away with her to the Deanery, and dispatch it quickly; go before into the Park; we two must go together.

Caius.

Cain. I know vat I have to do ; adieu. [Exit.]

Mrs. Page. Fare you well, Sir. My Husband will not rejoice so much at the Abuse of *Falstaff*, as he will chafe at the Doctor's marrying my Daughter : But 'tis no matter ; better a little chiding, than a great deal of heart-break.

Mrs. Ford. Where is Nan now, and her Troop of Fairies, and the *Welch Devil Herne* ?

Mrs. Page. They are all couch'd in a Pit hard by *Herne's Oak*, with obscur'd Lights ; which at the very instant of *Falstaff's* and our meeting they will at once display to the Night.

Mrs. Ford. That cannot chuse but amaze him.

Mrs. Page. If he be not amaz'd he will be mock'd ; if he be amaz'd he will be mock'd.

Mrs. Ford. We'll betray him finely.

Mrs. Page. Against such Lewdsters, and their Lechery, Those that betray them do no Treachery.

Mrs. Ford. The Hour draws on ; to the Oak, to the Oak. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

Enter Evans and Fairies.

Evans. Trib, trib, Fairies ; come and remember your Parts : Be bold, I pray you, follow me into the Pit, and when I give the Watch-ords do as I bid you : Come, come ; trib, trib. [Exeunt.]

SCENE V.

Enter Falstaff.

Fal. The *Wind* for Bell hath struck twelve, the Minute draws on ; now the hot-blooded Gods assist me. Remember, *Jove*, thou wast a Bull for thy *Europa* ; Love set on thy Horns. Oh powerful Love ! that in some respects makes a Beast a Man ; in some other, a Man a Beast. You were also, *Jupiter*, a Swan, for the love of *Leda* : Oh omnipotent Love ! how near the God drew to the Complexion of a Goose ; a Fault done first in the form of a Beast, O *Jove*, a beastly Fault ; and then another Fault in the semblance of a Fowl ; think on't, *Jove*, a foul Fault. When Gods have hot Backs, what shall poor Men do ? For me,

I am here a *Windsor* Stag, and the fattest, I think, i'th' Forreſt. Send me a cool Rut-time, *Jove*, or who can blame me to piſs my Tallow? Who comes here? my Doe?

Enter Miſtreſs Ford and Miſtreſs Page.

Mrs. Ford. Sir *John*? Art thou there, my Deer?
My Male-Deer?

Fal. My Doe with the black Scut? Let the Sky rain Potatoes, let it thunder to the Tune of *Green Sleeves*, hail kiſſing-Comfits, and ſnow Eriſgoes; let there come a Tempeſt of Provocation, I will ſhelter me here.

Mrs. Ford. Miſtreſs *Page* is come with me, ſweet Heart.

Fal. Divide me like a brib'd Buck, each a Haunch, I will keep my Sides to my ſelf, my Shoulders for the Fellow of this Walk, and my Horns I bequeath your Huſbands. Am I a Woodman, ha? Speak I like *Horns* the Hunter? Why, now is *Cupid* a Child of Conſcience, he makes Reſtitution. As I am a true Spirit, welcome.

[*Noiſe within.*]

Mrs. Page. Alas! what Noiſe?

Mrs. Ford. Heav'n forgive our Sins.

Fal. What ſhould this be?

Mrs. Ford. *Mrs. Page.* Away, away.

[*The Women run out.*]

Fal. I think the Devil will not have me damn'd, Left the Oil that is in me ſhould ſet Hell on Fire; He would never elſe croſs me thus.

Enter Fairies.

Quic. Fairies, black, gray, green, and white,
You Moon-ſhine Revellers, and Shades of Night,
You Orphan-Heirs of fix'd Deſtiny,
Attend your Office, and your Quality.
Crier Hobgoblin, make the Fairy O-yes.

Piſt. Elves, liſt your Names; ſilence, you airy Toys!
Cricket, to *Windsor* Chimneys ſhalt thou leap:
Where Fires thou ſin'd'ſt unſrak'd, and Hearths unſwept,
There pinch the Maids as blue as Bilbery.
Our radiant Queen hates Slut and Slutt'ry.

Fal. They are Fairies, he that ſpeaks to them ſhall die.
I'll wink and couch; no Man their Works muſt ſpy.

[*Lies down upon his Face.*]

Exit.

Eva. Where's *Bede*? Go you, and where you find a Maid
That e'er she sleep hath thrice her Prayers said,
Raise up the Organs of her Fantasie,
Sleep she as sound as careless Infancy;
But those that sleep and think not on their Sins,
Pinch them, Arms, Legs, Backs, Shoulders, Sides and Shins.

Quic. About, about;
Search *Ward* for Castle, Elves, within and out,
Strew good Luck, Ouphes, on every sacred Room,
That it may stand 'till the perpetual Doom,
In State as wholesome, as in State 'tis fit;
Worthy the Owner, and the Owner it.
The several Chairs of Order look you scour,
With Juice of Balm and ev'ry precious Flow'r;
Each fair Instalment, Coat, and sev'ral Crest,
With loyal Blazon evermore be blest.
And nightly-meadow-Fairies, look you sing-
Like to the *Garret*-compass in a Ring:
Th' Expressure that it bears, Green let it be,
More fertile fresh than all the Field to see;
And, *Hony Soit Qui Mal-y-Pense* write
In Emrold-tuffs, Flowers, purple, blue and white,
Like Sapphire-pearl, and rich Embroidery,
Buckled below fair Knight-hoods bending Knees,
Fairies use Flow'rs for their Character.
Away, disperse; but 'till 'tis one a Clock
Our dance of Custom round about the Oak
Of *Horns* the Hunter, let us not forget.

Eva. Pray you lock Hand in Hand, your selves in order
And twenty Glow-worms shall our Lanthorns be
To guide our Measure round about the Tree.
But stay, I smell a Man of middle Earth.

Fal. Heav'ns defend me from that *Welsh* Fairy,
Lest he transform me to a piece of Cheese.

Pist. Vild Worm, thou wast o'er-look'd even in thy Birth.

Quic. With Trial-fire touch me his Finger end;
If he be Chaste, the Flame will back descend
And turn him to no Pain; but if he start,
It is the Flesh of a corrupted Heart.

Pist. A Trial, come.

[*They burn him with their Tapers, and pinch him.*

Eva.

Eva. Come, will this Wood take fire?

Fal. Oh, oh, oh.

Quic. Corrupt, corrupt, and tainted in Desire;
About him, Fairies, sing a scornful Rhime.
And as you trip, still pinch him to your time.

THE SONG.

*Fie on simple Phantasie; Fie on Lust and Luxury:
Lust is but a bloody Fire, kindled with unchaste Desire,
Fed in Hearts whose Flames aspire,*

As Thoughts do blow them higher and higher.

Pinch him, Fairies, mutually; pinch him for his Villany;

Pinch him, and burn him, and turn him about,

'Till Candles, and Star-light, and Moon-shine be out.

[He offers to run out.]

Enter Page, Ford, &c. They lay hold on him.

Page. Nay, do not fly, I think I have watcht you now;
Will none but *Horne* the Hunter serve your turn?

Mrs. Page. I pray you come, hold up the Jest no higher!
Now, good Sir *John*, how like you *Windsor Wives*?
See you these Husbands? Do not these fair Oaks
Become the Forest better than the Town?

Ford. Now, Sir, who's a Cuckold now?

Master Broom. *Falstaff's* a Knave, a cuckoldy Knave,
Here are his Horns, *Master Broom*;
And, *Master Broom*, he hath enjoy'd nothing of *Ford's*
But his Buck-basket, his Cudgel, and twenty Pounds of
Money, which must be paid to *Master Broom*; his Horses
are arrested for it, *Master Broom*.

Mrs. Ford. Sir *John*, we have had ill Luck; we could
never meet. I will never take you for my Love again,
but I will always count you my Deer.

Fal. I do begin to perceive that I am made an Ass.

Ford. Ay, and an Ox too: Both the Proofs are extant.

Fal. And these are not Fairies:

I was three or four times in the Thought they were not
Fairies, and yet the guiltiness of my Mind, the sudden
surprize of my Powers, drove the grossness of the Pop-
pery into a receiv'd Belief, in despite of the Teeth of
all

all Rhime and Reason, that they were Fairies. See now how Wit may be made a Jack-a-lent, when 'tis upon ill Employment.

Eva. Sir *John Falstaff*, serve Got, and leave your Desires, and Fairies will not pinse you.

Ford. Well said, Fairy *Hugh*.

Eva. And leave you your Jealouzies too, I pray you.

Ford. I will never mistrust my Wife again, 'till thou art able to woo her in good *English*.

Fal. Have I laid my Brain in the Sun and dry'd it, that it wants Matter to prevent so gross o'er-reaching as this? Am I ridden with a *Welch* Goat too? Shall I have a Coxcomb of Frize? 'Tis time I were choak'd with a piece of toasted Cheese.

Eva. Seese is not good to give Putter; your Pelly is all Putter.

Fal. Seese and Putter? Have I liv'd to stand in the taunt of one that makes Fritters of *English*? This is enough to be the decay of Lust and late-walking, through the Realm.

Mrs. Page. Why Sir *John*, do you think, though we would have thrust Virtue out of our Hearts by the Head and Shoulders, and have given our selves without scruple to Hell, that ever the Devil could have made you our Delight?

Ford. What, a Hodge-pudding? A Bag of Flax?

Mrs. Page. A puffed Man?

Page. Old, cold, wither'd, and of intolerable Entrails?

Ford. And one that is as slanderous as Satan?

Page. And as poor as *Job*?

Ford. And as wicked as his Wife?

Eva. And given to Fornications, and to Taverns, and Sack, and Wine, and Metheglins, and to Drinkings, and Sweetings, and Staring, Pribbles and Prabbles?

Fal. Well, I am your Theme; you have the Start of me, I am dejected; I am not able to answer the *Welsh* Flannel, Ignorance it self is a Plummet o'er me, use me as you will.

Ford. Marry Sir, we'll bring you to *Windsor* to one Mr. *Broom*, that you have cozen'd of Money, to whom you should have been a Pander: Over and above that you have suffer'd, I think, to repay that Money will be a biting Affliction.

Page,

Page. Yet be cheerful, Knight, thou shalt eat a Possiet to Night at my House, where I will desire thee to laugh at my Wife, that now laughs at thee. Tell her Mr. *Slender* hath marry'd her Daughter.

Mrs. Page. Doctors doubt that ;
If *Anne Page* be my Daughter, she is, by this, Doctor *Caius's* Wife.

Enter Slender.

Slen. What hoe ! hoe ! Father *Page* !

Page. Son ? How now ? How now Son,
Have you dispatch'd ?

Slen. Dispatch'd ? I'll make the best in *Gloucestershire* know on't ; would I were hang'd-la, else.

Page. Of what, Son ?

Slen. I came yonder at *Eaton* to marry Mistress *Anne Page*, and she's a great lubberly Boy. If it had not been i'th' Church, I would have swing'd him, or he should have swing'd me. If I did not think it had been *Anne Page*, would I might never stir, and 'tis a Post-master's Boy.

Page. Upon my Life then you took the wrong.

Slen. What need you tell me that ? I think so, when I took a Boy for a Girl : If I had been marry'd to him, for all he was in Woman's Apparel, I would not have had him.

Page. Why, this is your own Folly.
Did not I tell you how you should know my Daughter
By her Garments ?

Slen. I went to her in white and cry'd Mum, and she cry'd Budget, as *Anne* and I had appointed, and yet it was not *Anne*, but a Post-master's Boy.

Mrs. Page. Good *George*, be not angry ; I knew of your purpose, turn'd my Daughter into green, and indeed she is now with the Doctor at the Deanery, and there marry'd.

Enter Caius.

Caius. Ver is Mistress *Page* ; by gar I am cozen'd, I ha' marry'd one Garsoon, a Boy ; oon Pefant, by gar. A Boy ; it is not *Anne Page*, by gar, I am cozen'd.

Mrs. Page. Why ? Did you take her in green ?

Caius. Ay be gar, and 'tis a Boy ; be gar, I'll raise all
Windfor. *Ford.*

Ford. This is strange! who hath got the right *Anne*?

Page. My Heart misgives me; here comes *Mr. Fenton*.
How now *Mr. Fenton*?

Anne. Pardon, good Father; good my Mother, Pardon.

Page. Now Mistress,

How chance you went not with *Mr. Slender*?

Mrs. Page. Why went you not with *Mr. Doctor, Maid*?

Fens. You do amaze her. Hear the Truth of it.

You would have marry'd her most shamefully,

Where there was no proportion held in Love:

The Truth is, she and I, long since contracted,

Are now so sure that nothing can dissolve us.

Th' Offence is holy that she hath committed,

And this Deceit loses the name of Craft,

Of Disobedience, or unduteous Title;

Since therein she doth evitate and shun

A thousand irreligious cursed Hours

Which forced Marriage would have brought upon her.

Ford. Stand not amaz'd, here is no Remedy.

In Love, the Heav'ns themselves do guide the State;

Money buys Lands, and Wives are sold by Fate.

Fal. I am glad, tho' you have ta'en a special Stand to
strike at me, that your Arrow hath glanc'd.

Page. Well, what Remedy? *Fenton*, Heav'n give thee
Joy?

What cannot be eschew'd, must be embrac'd.

Fal. When Night-dogs run, all sorts of Deer are chac'd.

Mrs. Page. Well, I will muse no further. *Mr. Fenton*,
Heav'n give you many, many merry Days.

Good Husband, let us every one go home,

And laugh this Sport o'er by a Country Fire,

Sir John and all.

Ford. Let it be so, *Sir John*:

To Master *Broom* you yet shall hold your Word;

For he, to Night, shall lye with Mistress *Ford*.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*]

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